CURIOUS CASE OF AN IRS AGENT JOHN P. HAYES

THE NATION

JULY 2, 1977 60 cents

IS IT THE FUTURE? WILL IT WORK?

With the Venceremos in Cuba

HARRY MAURER

Midwives vs. Doctors
WHO CAN DELIVER A BABY?

MARY BARNETT

A Century of Pyrrhic Victories
INDIAN LAWSUITS AND WHITE POWER

PETRA T. SHATTUCK & JILL NORGREN

Books on

MAY 27 1977

WITHDRAWN

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LETTERS

Peace Academy

Los Angeles, Calif.

I read with great interest Jeffrey Stein's "Grad School for Juntas" [*The Nation*, May 21]. I wonder why I have not read in *The Nation* anything about the proposed Peace Academy. In fact, the media in general have bypassed this important legislation. Here follows a summary:

On January 26, 1977, Sen. Jennings Randolph (for himself and Sen. Mark Hatfield) introduced S. 469 which was referred to the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare—a bill to establish a commission to study proposals for establishing the National Academy of Peace and Conflict Resolution.

On January 27, 1977, Rep. Andrew Young (for himself and others) introduced H.R. 2651, which was referred jointly to the Committees on International Relations and Education and Labor—a bill to establish a commission to study proposals for establishing the National Academy of Peace and Conflict Resolution.

Grace Myers

fight over fire

New York City

Frank Warner's "Ma Bell, Firebug" [*The Nation*, June 4] contained a number of false and irresponsible allegations. . . .

The Bell System's safety record speaks for itself. The New York Telephone Company fire in 1975 was a very unusual event in an overall excellent record. In our 100-year history, a life has never been lost in a central office fire. . . .

Mr. Warner's article was . . . based on information supplied by Charles Bendersky, a former Bell Laboratories employee, who incorrectly interpreted data available to him to create a distorted picture of Bell System fire safety. A few examples from the article:

¶Bell Laboratories never referred to Bell System buildings as firetraps. Moreover, Bendersky himself, in August 1974, stated that cable closures withstood fire penetration and prevented fires from spreading from one floor to the next.

¶Bendersky claimed tests indicated that floors of central office buildings could not meet anybody's standards. In fact, the tests he referred to were not designed for this purpose at all. Later testing, under conditions similar to those recommended by the American Society for Testing and Materials, showed our practices for cable hole closures provided two-hour fire resistance, a period in strict compliance with, and in many cases exceeding, prevailing building-code fire safety requirements for floors.

¶There is no reliable evidence to support the claims that smoke from burning polyvinyl chloride (PVC) is highly combustible or explosive. Moreover, the smoke has some fire-retardant characteristics.

¶No report of fire tests has been falsified, nor have any data been suppressed. Valid Bell Laboratories test data and results were incorporated in the report which AT&T provided to Pacific Telephone. Bendersky reviewed the report and did not disagree with its contents. . . .

W.H. Turner,
Engineering Director
Equipment and Building (AT&T)

Washington, D.C.

Bell Labs tries to leave the impression that my article hinges totally on one man, Charles Bendersky. . . . That is simply not true. If any engineer were to look at but two documents, the October 22, 1974 Bell Labs "Memo for File" and the July 22, 1975 Bell Labs-Pacific Telephone report to San Francisco, he would see the deception.

Irwin Benjamin, chief of the fire safety engineering divi-

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EDITORIALS

Spain: The Socialist Initiative

Three observations have dominated comment on the Spanish parliamentary elections: that the results were surprising, that they constitute a victory for Prime Minister Adolfo Suárez, and that the whole affair was a triumph for democracy. All three are wrong in varying degrees. No educated observer should have been surprised by the vote. Suárez certainly was not the victor. And the democracy that Spaniards apparently embraced—and for which Western commentators have so warmly commended them—is an extremely flawed democracy indeed.

The great "surprise" of the election was the strong showing of Felipe González's Socialist Workers Party (PSOE), the official Spanish wing of the Second International. The PSOE took 28.5 percent of the popular vote to 33.9 percent for Suárez's Center-Right coalition. The Socialists thus became the largest party in Spain. Not only should this have been expected from the huge rallies and marches mobilized by the PSOE during the campaign, but it reflects the strong leftward trend that has become evident around the world—and particularly in Europe, where events in Portugal, France and Italy have powerfully affected the political climate.

It was a foregone conclusion that Suárez's coalition—based mainly on his own popularity and consisting otherwise of a hodgepodge of Christian Democrats, centrist professionals and the more mild-mannered Franco leftovers—would emerge as the governing power after the election. However, its one-third of the vote was below the pundits' predictions. Thanks to disproportionate representation, Suárez will enjoy 47 percent of the seats (165 of 350) in the lower house of Parliament. The Socialists, for their 28.5 percent, will get 118 seats (33.7 percent), which leaves them overrepresented, but much less than the Suárez group. (The organization of the farcical upper house, with a large bloc of its members appointed by King Juan Carlos, is among the many measures employed by the Right to keep Spanish democracy from getting out of hand.) Suárez will therefore easily form a government, but its popular foundation will be less substantial than he hoped.

The Suárez success was artificially magnified by the electoral system and the only partial democratization of Spain. As one Socialist put it, "The elections have not been fixed. But they have been tilted." Sparsely populated and traditionally conservative rural areas were accorded far more than their share of representatives. Suárez, as the incumbent Prime Minister, basked in TV exposure that his opponents did not receive. A subtle censorship still prevails, and some reports indicate that many Spaniards, not trusting the secrecy of the secret ballot, hesitated to vote for the Left.

Under these conditions the Left's performance appears even more impressive, with the PSOE's popular vote almost equaling Suárez's and the Communists outpolling the right-wing Popular Alliance. In fact, the election produced a geographical distribution of political power remarkably similar to the one that prevailed in the turbu-

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lent 1930s. Suárez drew much of his support from rural areas; the Socialists took Valencia, Seville and Barcelona (they split Madrid with Suárez), along with the Basque country, Catalonia and the poverty-stricken provinces of Andalusia. In other words, as James Markham of *The New York Times* noted, the PSOE won in ". . . Spain's most politically alert and numerically underrepresented sectors. . . ."

Given the Left's resurgence, even Suárez's superb political talents may soon be stretched beyond their capacity. Spain's economy is in very poor health. The usual austerity measures necessary to cool inflationary fever and staunch the outflow of foreign reserves will be impossible to impose without the acquiescence of the working class —or a return to repression. Thus the political initiative may well lie with the Socialists. If they choose to support Suárez and austerity, the restive workers may be subdued. But if, in the next few years, they decide to make an uncompromising bid for power, the fragile structure of parliamentary democracy in Spain will be severely tested.

'Punitive and Tragic'

The Burger Supreme Court has once more shown its insensitivity to individual rights in its 6-to-3 decision allowing states to deny public funds for abortion, except in cases of medical necessity. As usual, the issue was decided on the narrowest possible legal grounds, and it was equally narrow in the moral sense.

The effect of this ruling will be, as Justice Marshall put it, to prevent "nearly all poor women from obtaining safe and legal abortions" and thus to "brutally coerce" them "to bear children whom society will scorn for every day of their lives." So much for the even hand of justice. Justice Blackmun used just as strong language in his dissent when he called the result of the majority ruling "punitive and tragic." "Implicit," he wrote, "is the condescension that she may go elsewhere for her abortion. I find that disingenuous and alarming, almost reminiscent of 'let them eat cake.' "

The comparison with that famous cynicism of Marie Antoinette is apt. The Court's holding uses scrupulous constitutional logic to affirm a right that cannot be exercised by hundreds of thousands of young women unless the state intervenes to help. It accomplishes this miracle of hand-washing, in the decision written by Justice Powell, by leaving the federal and state governments free to authorize nontherapeutic abortions "through the normal processes of democracy . . . by the representatives of the people, not by this Court." Recent votes in Congress, including one barring federal funds even for abortions to save a woman's life, show how cruelly this lofty deference to political, as against judicial, determination of the issue would actually work out.

In 1975 Medicaid paid for about one-quarter of the 1.1 million abortions performed in that year. Justice Marshall calculated that among nonwhite women 38.5 percent depended on state-aided abortions as against 7 percent of white women. "I am appalled," Marshall wrote, "at the ethical bankruptcy of those who preach a 'right to life' that means, under present social policies, a bare

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existence in utter misery for so many poor women and their children."

The majority has chosen the easy way out by leaving it to the political process (i.e., the various legislatures). The politicians are also bound to take the painless (and heartless) way. "Why," asked Justice Blackmun, author of the 1973 landmark decision on the right to abortion, "should any politician incur the demonstrated wrath and noise of the abortion opponents when mere silence and nonactivity accomplish the results the opponents want?" The question answers itself.

With a deep bow to "reasonable standards," the Court has effectively reversed the 1973 ruling. It would now permit states and municipalities to do, by indirection, what it forbade them to do directly just four years ago. It declares, against all reason and sound principle, that the states have a "valid and important interest in encouraging childbirth." A much more "reasonable" view is that the state should have no position on this inherently private matter and that it should not withhold its help for whatever decision the individual woman makes. As *The New York Times*'s legal correspondent Lesley Oelsner summarizes the position of the lower courts and dissenters in this case, they hold that "paying for childbirth but not abortion is an undue interference with a woman's constitutional right, established in the 1973 decisions, to decide whether to bear the child."

There is hardly a more fundamental right and it has now been virtually annulled. Cowardly politicians will complete the work of the Supreme Court's conservative majority. They will be pushed in that direction by the extremist minority of the Catholic Right to Life movement, determined to impose its standards on the majority. The Court's retreat from reason and justice, truly defined, will afflict hundreds of thousands of young women and their unwanted children, all of them at the least advantaged levels of this society. It should be a signal for a major effort, in politics and litigation, to reverse the evil effects of this cruel and discriminatory ruling.

Too Slow to Anger

President Carter uses two kinds of carpets in dealing with gabby generals who go off more or less cocked on matters that are none of their business. First he hauls them onto the beige carpet in the Oval Office and dresses them down a bit. Then he unrolls a red carpet to march them off to new and important assignments.

There was the Singlaub case a few weeks ago, wherein the third-ranking officer in our Korean command publicly deplored the troop reduction there which the Commander in Chief had announced. His "punishment" for this nervy indiscretion was to be made Chief of Staff of the Army Development Command in Georgia.

Then came the general with the musical comedy name, Lieut. Gen. Donn A. Starry, who made a high-school graduation address in Germany chock-full of globaloney. Starry predicted that the United States would probably get involved in a Chinese-Soviet war to prevent either from controlling the Eurasian land mass. In passing, he took a swipe at "the liberal press" whose main interest, he said, was not "the truth" but to "muckrake around every public administration just to see it fall." Starry's reward, after a tap on the wrist, was to go off to the four-star post he had been slated for before he began to think out loud; he will be the head of the Army's Training and Doctrine Command.

It is basic to our form of government that members of the uniformed services do not express themselves on matters of policy. One must wonder how effectively Mr. Carter's gentle admonitions teach this essential lesson to the Starry Singlaubs of the military world.

Kraft Flunks Carter

In the spirit of the "new criticism," the literary school of a while back that focused its attention minutely on a text to extract the whole meaning of a writer without regard to biographical or other distractions, we turn our attention to a recent column by Joseph Kraft. The *New York Post* ran this effort on June 18 under the title "Carter's Global Gospel," and it is perhaps worth some exegesis because this political columnist fairly well represents the liberal establishment of Washington, or at least that part of it that took a "balanced" and generally positive view of the works of Kissinger under Nixon and Ford.

From the start of the Carter administration, this widely syndicated writer has tended to look askance at the doings, and especially the sayings, of the President. In the essay under consideration Kraft, quite typically, writes that ". . . Carter continues to think—and, worse, say—dumb things about foreign policy."

Kraft, too, has a text under his analytical gaze. It is Carter's opening statement to the Magazine Publishers Association, which met with the President at the White House on June 10. Herewith that text:

> My own inclination, though, is to aggressively challenge, in a peaceful way, of course, the Soviet Union and others for influence in areas of the world that we feel are crucial to us now or potentially crucial in 15 or 20 years from now. That includes places like Vietnam, and places like Iraq, and Somalia and Algeria and places like the People's Republic of China and even Cuba.

Now, clearly, all that was said extempore; if proof were needed, the repetition of "places like" provides it. Normally, Carter is a remarkably fluent and precise extemporaneous speaker, as his frequent press conferences amply demonstrate. The text Kraft has chosen is exceptional in its clumsiness of phrasing and thus stands out from the rest of the uncollected works of the President. It is utterly unrepresentative of the corpus under discussion, and Kraft must know that.

So what does our analyst do with those two sentences? He proceeds to tear them apart, accusing their author, yet again, of "aimless popping off," of "outlandish ideas" and of their expression in "fatuous comments." This is characteristic of Kraft's usual approach to Carter's pronouncements on foreign policy. He looks on that as a preserve for an elite which Kraft very much wants us to know is for the likes of Kissinger and himself, and has no room for anyone comparatively untutored, even if he happens to be President.

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As a commentator long accustomed to moving in and around the ruling circles of Washington, Kraft patronizingly regards Presidents and their policies as the products of their staffs, not of the man himself. His function should be more that of a mouthpiece than an originator of foreign policy. That arcane subject, for the Krafts of the world, can be mastered only by experts, men who have "devoted their lives" to the study of its mysteries. Nixon's Kissinger is, of course, the supreme example of this chosen breed, Carter's Brzezinski being a lesser figure of the type, though Kraft admits that the latter and Secretary of State Vance "know(s) much better."

So why, he asks in something like despair, are these two "not pounding the table insisting that sensible policies not be compromised by the rhetorical instincts of the President and his Ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young"? In an odd misuse of Thomas Gray's famous line about buried talent, Kraft wrings his hands about the "mute, inglorious Miltons" among his advisers, and in his audience, who failed to criticize the President for "preaching his own original untutored gospel."

The substance of Kraft's critique, such as it is, bears on the nature of Carter's list of "crucial . . . places." It can be conceded that it is an unusual grouping unless the President knows something about Somalia, Algeria and Iraq that is screened from the rest of us, which is not impossible. The inclusion of Vietnam may have been made because of the evident difficulty of establishing normal relations with that battered country in the wake of the many promises—and lies—of Kissinger and Nixon in the fraudulent negotiations for a "peace with honor." The American war there was certainly not for "crucial" objectives, as we were not among the last to recognize, but it can be argued that there may be a kind of exemplary cruciality in the way the United States does or does not make peace with that victim of our misguided ambitions. Cuba was on Carter's list and the same argument can be made about it, along with the strategic one.

Kraft rises to heights of indignation over the presence of "Communist China" on that list ("Is Carter under the illusion that the Peking regime is somehow composed of Russian stooges?"). But Carter's rambling list permits, by a leap of logic, the conclusion that Moscow might indeed gain "influence" in Peking, not that it packs that weight now. Given the signs that some sort of Russo-Chinese rapprochement has been at least considered in both capitals, it is not far-fetched to imagine it actually happening within the two decades Carter mentioned. That would seem to dispose of the columnist's point, but Kraft goes on to say that the President thus "lays down the gauntlet to the Kremlin" and "Once more . . . poisons a relationship that—except for his various blunders and bloopers—could be relatively smooth and extremely useful." This passage, breathing the very spirit of Kissinger's "détente" (based on U.S. relations with both those Communist powers), could almost have been dictated to Kraft by that old master of *Realpolitik*.

Thus we leave the text of Kraft and become contextual for a final comment. The columnist has just returned from Russia where he found the spirit of détente gravely threatened, the dissident movement "destroyed," and a wholly new phenomenon, undetected by others of his knowledgeable sort—that "there is a powerful public opinion in this country." Shades of Walter Lippmann, whom Kraft once seemed eager to succeed in the general regard! Nothing more needs to be said about Kraft's credentials to comment on Carter's "untutored gospel."

Clark Foreman

Clark Foreman was a Georgian of Georgians, what at one time was known as "a Southern aristocrat." The family had deep roots in the state's history; his grandfather, Clark Howell, edited the *Atlanta Constitution*. Handsome, courtly and debonair, Foreman never had the slightest doubt who he was, where he came from, or what he stood for. He was part of that small but influential band of mostly upper-class, well-educated Southern whites who carried the banner of the New Deal in the South. Their idealism had vague Protestant overtones, but derived mainly from the canons and teachings of Thomas Jefferson. Respect for what we call "human rights" was part of their inheritance.

While a student at the University of Georgia, Foreman had been horrified by a lynching on campus, and that probably had something to do with his lifelong commitment to racial justice. From Georgia he went to Harvard. Later he studied at that incubator of radicals, the London School of Economics, and at Columbia University where he received his doctorate in political science. A pioneer in civil rights activities in the South even before the New Deal, Foreman headed up, for a time, the Georgia Commission on Interracial Cooperation. He was an ideal spokesman for racial justice in the South; he had the right background and training and he represented the best of the attenuated but very real liberal intellectual tradition that survived in the region.

With the advent of the New Deal, Foreman served as race relations adviser to Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior. In accepting the post, he insisted on naming a black professional to his staff, with the stipulation that this person, if he proved satisfactory, should take over his position at the end of the first year. That black was Dr. Robert Weaver who years later became a member of Lyndon Johnson's Cabinet. Foreman also insisted that segregation be banned in the Interior Department's cafeteria for office workers.

President Roosevelt tapped him to serve as secretary of the commission that prepared the famous Report on Economic Conditions in the South. This report fixed the basic lines of policy in the South not merely for Roosevelt but for Claude Pepper, Dr. Frank Graham, Lister Hill and other New Deal Democrats. It prompted the formation of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, which Foreman served as treasurer, and the Southern Regional Council. With Pepper, he stage-managed a brilliant fight for repeal of the poll tax. It was turned back by Senator Bilbo's filibuster, but led eventually to the adoption of the Twenty-fourth Amendment.

In 1944 Foreman became Secretary of the National Citizens Political Action Committee and served in that capacity until he became full-time director of the South-

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ern Conference for Human Welfare in 1945. Then in 1948 he was named treasurer of the Wallace for President Committee. The whole thrust of the campaign, in which Foreman played a key role, was directed against segregation and racial discrimination and in support of joint biracial efforts to improve living, working and social conditions in the region. From the outset the Wallace people insisted that all meetings must be open to blacks and whites on a nonsegregated basis. This was in fact the first time that an open, nonsegregated campaign was waged in the South in a Presidential election.

The reaction, of course, was predictable. When police attempted to prevent Virginia Durr from addressing a nonsegregated meeting in Norfolk, Foreman, who was seated in the audience, climbed over the orchestra pit, got the microphone and, ignoring the police, announced: "We will not accept segregation. If any of you feel uncomfortable, you can leave." None left and after a moment the meeting proceeded. In Savannah he was forcibly pulled from the platform by police when he attempted to address a mixed meeting, but it was rescheduled for the next evening and there was no interference. Similar incidents occurred in Macon, Winston-Salem and other Southern cities. In all, perhaps 100 or more nonsegregated biracial meetings were held in the South that year. That these efforts were successful despite Wallace's poor showing in the region is indicated by the fact that segregated political rallies were gradually phased out after the 1948 campaign.

In 1951, along with I.F. Stone, H.H. Wilson, Ted Thackrey, Corliss Lamont and others, Foreman was instrumental in setting up the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee (today the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee) which he served as executive director until his retirement in 1968. Of recent years he had been living in Puerto Rico.

A great debt is owed to the small band of white Southerners—Foreman, Josephine Wilkins, that gallant Southern lady who died on June 2, Clifford and Virginia Durr, Dr. Frank Graham, Palmer Weber, C.B. Baldwin, Hugo Black, Dr. Will Alexander and the others, who were the soul and spirit of the New Deal in the South. They simply would not be intimidated; they insisted on being heard. They deeply loved the South and rejected the Dixiecrat reading of its traditions as spurious and unworthy. It was this feeling, which all of them shared, that lent authenticity to what they said and did. They worked closely with blacks, but were more or less forced to take the lead in the beginning. It was their initiative, their example, their leadership and, above all, their courage, that helped bring the civil rights movement into being. Fear had literally no meaning for Clark Foreman. Gallant, high-spirited, intrepid, he "charged" into action like one of Jeb Stuart's cavalry officers.

Today we have as President a Georgian who has consistently voiced his deep concern for human rights. President Carter's views on human rights, particularly on racial issues, grow out of the efforts of this earlier generation of white Southerners who joined with blacks in inaugurating a new era in race relations in the region. We can only hope that he will demonstrate the same resolute refusal to retreat under pressure. CAREY MCWILLIAMS

IS IT THE FUTURE? WILL IT WORK?

WITH THE VENCEREMOS IN CUBA

HARRY MAURER

I boarded the Air Jamaica jet for the first leg of my trip to Cuba with a phrase playing through my mind like a song: "I have seen the future, and it works." For me—and for how many other Americans sympathetic to the socialist ideal?—Lincoln Steffens's epigram is perhaps the most dismal remark of the century. Steffens certainly had seen the future in the USSR of 1917, but its ghastly failure to work in the manner imagined by countless believers has haunted the Left ever since. The legacy to socialists of the last sixty years includes a large measure of the bitter wisdom that grows from withered hopes.

Yet I left for Cuba with a contradictory feeling as well: excitement similar to that of Mike Gold, an early American Communist who saw the newborn Soviet Union. "You will get a royal reception there," wrote Gold to Upton Sinclair in 1924, "and it will heal many of the sore places that America produces in all rebels. One feels so normal and strong in Russia, and all things one theorizes about here and feels a little bitter and savage in defending, are so simple and real in Russia. It's a great amazing place, everything beginning. . . ."

I had never before visited a socialist country. Cuba is widely thought to be the least repressive of all. So despite the Steffens refrain in my thoughts, I hoped that Cuba would heal some of *my* sore places. I would be working and traveling with the Venceremos Brigade, the group of American leftists that visits Cuba every year. I had no illusions about becoming an expert in two weeks; what follows, therefore, are the impressions of an observer who admits he was willing to be impressed.

My vision of Cuba was governed by what I soon came to call "double consciousness," the sensation of constantly looking at something from opposite points of view. It began halfway through the flight, when an odd juxtaposition took place. As the jet passed over Cuba on its way to Jamaica, I was reading *Democracy in Cuba*, a pamphlet published by the Venceremos Brigade. In its entire discussion of Cuba's political system—that is, its

Harry Maurer has recently returned from a two-week visit to Cuba, where he was a journalistic guest of the Venceremos Brigade. Mr. Maurer is assistant editor of The Nation.

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analysis of how power is exercised—there was not a word about the role played by Fidel Castro.

While I read, a crew member announced that the stewardesses ("our lovely Jamaican girls") had prepared a fashion show. Soon they were parading up and down the aisle, pirouetting now and again, in costumes ranging from pants suits to see-through evening dresses, while one stewardess read the commentary: "And now, here's Becky in a stunning gown of deep blue and red, with green trim. . . . This gown was designed especially for Becky by Sun Fashions of Kingston, and is appropriate for formal parties, the theatre or the ballet."

The moment left me bemused. I knew that on the island 35,000 feet below, the repellent aspects of the fashion show—the advertising forced on a captive audience, the use of beautiful women to peddle expensive clothes, and the overtones of social class in that awful word *appropriate*—would be out of the question. But how would I react to a country whose attempt to explain itself—assuming the Venceremos pamphlet had been written with Cuban approval—seemed so misleading? The omission of Fidel typified what I expect from propaganda, but was propaganda all I could expect from Cuba?

Following an afternoon in Kingston (during which it struck me that the Cubans should be pleased by the lack of direct flights from the United States, since no more powerful image of what Cuba has escaped could be found than in the festering streets of Jamaica) I boarded a Cubana Airlines propeller plane. Three hours later we arrived at José Martí International Airport. By then I was tremendously excited. Once on the ground, I had the urge to scoop up some dirt and let it run through my fingers—socialist earth! No private owner! All around was asphalt, however. Embarrassed that romanticism had so completely overwhelmed me, I reminded myself that Cuba was just another country, the Cubans not all titans, and socialism not the Garden of Eden. The ramshackle, rattling bus that took me to the Venceremos camp helped bring me back to earth.

The essential thing to understand about Cuba, I soon decided, is that it remains an extremely poor country. This took me aback at first. Subconsciously I had thought that after eighteen years of revolution, Cuba might have progressed to the level of, say, rural Pennsylvania. Instead I found a Caribbean island not much different in appearance from Honduras, the one Central American nation I know well. In the countryside many people still live in huts with dirt floors and thatched roofs. I saw cane fields with a tractor harvesting at one end, an oxcart at the other. In Havana the buses are so crowded that people ride hanging out the doors, perilously clinging to one another. While cars seem reasonably plentiful, the majority are American models dating back to the 1950s. Plumbing and telephones are unreliable, and during my two weeks (always in camps or school dormitories) I did not have a hot shower. Cubans wait in long lines for almost everything, including food—with amazing good will, it must be said.

But one is instantly aware that Cuba's poverty is different from that of other Latin American countries, and the difference is what makes Cuba a world apart. It might best be conveyed by contrast with an encounter I once had in Honduras. On my first day I had visited a park overlooking the capital city. There I met Oscar, the leader of a gang of ragged children who work the tourists for coins and food. He accepted a sweet roll and sat down to chat. How old was he? "Eight." Where did he live? "In the street," he said, as though the question were stupid. But where did he sleep? Equally obvious: "At McDonald's." Yes, he meant the Golden Arches; near the cathedral that night I found the place, with a dozen urchins curled up on the sidewalk in front. The few still awake were trying to cadge bits of Quarter-Pounders with Cheese.

Such a meeting could not occur in Cuba. In the first place, there are no children adrift in the streets, begging, hawking newspapers or shining shoes. No one is dressed in rags; even in the countryside, where crowds of children come running from their huts to stare at passing buses (just as in Honduras) the youngsters wear shoes. There is no zone of shacks around Havana for peasants who have migrated and cannot find work. No idle men slouch in barroom doors, no women sell mangoes (or themselves) on street corners. And there is no McDonald's in Cuba, no glittering American presence to bleed the economy and make the Cubans wish they were someone or somewhere else. As a result, I saw no child in Cuba with eyes like Oscar's: hard, sly, suspicious, and indifferent to me—the *gringo*—except as a mark. That look, that attitude, have vanished.

Venceremos. The word means "We shall overcome," and the Venceremos Brigade believes that it has. Since 1969, in defiance of the government's ban on travel to Cuba, the brigade has taken ten contingents of Americans (some 2,700 people) to the island for five weeks of work and touring. The first two brigades cut sugar cane as part of the attempted 10 million-ton harvest in 1969-70; now *brigadistas* work on housing construction. In the early days, visiting Cuba was a risky business, almost certain to attract the attention of the FBI. But the brigade survived the years of harassment, and its organizers feel that their perseverance played a part in the eventual relaxation of the travel ban.

The brigade's purpose is not, as one might think, to contribute manual labor to the construction of socialism in Cuba. In fact, the work done by *brigadistas* defrays only part of the brigade's cost to the Cubans. The real goal is solidarity. Brigade members learn about Cuba and spread the word back home, thus counteracting the anti-Cuban slant of the media; and the seventy Cuban *brigadistas* strengthen their ties with "progressive" Americans. Also, the annual presence of some 200 admiring *Yánquis* is cheering to the Cubans, who usually think of the United States only as their enemy. The brigade also serves as rest and recreation for American leftists wounded by the indifference of their country; Cuba returns them invigorated to the struggle.

The beneficiaries of this medicine in 1977 were a motley bunch, ranging in age from 18 to 65, including

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virtually every racial and ethnic group in the United States, and representing more than 100 different organizations. In other words, they were a cross-section of the "movement," with notable exceptions: no Maoists (who think Cuba is a colony of the imperialist Soviet Union); no Trotskyists (who believe the Soviet Government must be overthrown); and no people from Gay Liberation groups (who presumably would not fit in, since the Cubans discriminate against homosexuals).

Resembling as it does a blend of summer camp, religious retreat and political convention, and stressing the collective over the individual, the brigade seems threatening to someone who, like me, is innately skeptical and solitary. When I arrived, the *brigadistas* had already been working three weeks, and seemed to have melded themselves into a unit red-hot with revolutionary fervor. Not that the fervor was unjustified; Cuba is an inspiring place. I, too, quickly learned such patriotic songs as *"Cuba, qué linda es Cuba"* and sang them often. But the brigade's tendency to chant slogans at every opportunity, and to give standing ovations to every stirring phrase in every speech, left me standing aside. Some *brigadistas* pointed out that I had not worked for weeks with the Cubans, whose total commitment to the collective was powerfully infectious. But I doubt it would have made much difference.

Nor was the brigade's atmosphere conducive to a critical approach. All too often the *brigadistas'* response to Cuba did not go beyond "Oh, wow." One extreme example came after we had visited the famous mental hospital on the outskirts of Havana. A group of psychotic patients there gave a remarkable performance of theatre and music, during which they sang songs about Angola, imperialism, etc. Later I overheard one brigade member telling others that the performance showed that in Cuba, even mental patients have a higher level of political understanding than do the vast majority of Americans. No one disagreed.

And I gradually discovered that, if the *brigadistas* tended to gaze upon Cuba with adoring eyes, they did not feel the same about one another. Even with Maoists and Trotskyists absent, the faction-ridden state of the movement was obvious. Politics was discussed from dawn to past midnight, and in this the brigade succeeded: weeks of close quarters forced together members of races, parties and causes that would rarely interact in the United States. But the mood often strayed from comradely exchange toward uglier emotions. Charges of sexism, racism, liberalism, revisionism and ultra-leftism left scars. There were the usual worries about who was an agent. All this suggested one reason for the *brigadistas'* passionate and indiscriminate embrace of Cuba: it helped maintain a group spirit that might otherwise have turned surly.

Some *brigadistas* did offer a perspective I would otherwise have missed. A few had been on the first or second brigade, and were amazed by the changes in Cuba. Not only had the landscape been transformed by the rapid pace of development, they said, but the atmosphere of the country was entirely different. In 1969 the threat of counterrevolution had seemed very real. Frequent sabotage and landings by anti-Castro Cubans, in addition to the fear of direct invasion by the United States, kept the country in a state of nervous vigilance. Also, the entire people was

Moses J. Newson, Baltimore Afro-American
Maurer: Our Man in Havana

mobilized for the gigantic effort of the 10 million-ton harvest, which was not going well. As a result, the Cubans had been excitable and hot-tempered, and the brigades tuned to the highest emotional pitch. In contrast, said the veterans, Cubans today are relaxed, confident, humorous —and as I witnessed, infinitely patient with the *brigadistas*. In eight years the revolution has matured.

After finishing its work, the brigade—some 300 strong, including the Cuban contingent and seven journalists—toured Cuba for eight days. We saw schools, factories, museums, the Moncada barracks, a beach—in other words, the standard sights.

One morning we visited the Pioneer Palace in Camagüey Province. Most Cuban children through the age of 12 belong to the Pioneers, an organization which teaches them revolutionary virtues and one of a variety of skills such as ham radio or animal husbandry. When we arrived, the uniformed Pioneers were lining the entrance to the palace, clapping in rhythm. We moved between them to an amphitheatre, returning the applause in the socialist manner. Greetings and speeches were exchanged and the director of the palace led the Pioneers in their slogan: "*Pioneros para el Comunismo,*" he shouted, and the children responded in unison, saluting: "*Seremos como el Ché*!" (We will be like Ché.) After viewing the impressively well-equipped classrooms, we returned to the amphitheatre for a program of song and dance. In the final number, a group of Pioneers in infantry fatigues

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enacted a tableau of battle. Led by a boy with blazing eyes who carried a red flag, the children surged forward and back. The combat was fierce. Suddenly the boy lurched and staggered, mortally wounded. The children retreated, regrouped, and then swept to victory, a girl lifting the flag from the hands of her martyred comrade.

This visit, like several others, caused all my prejudices to bristle. Weren't these kids being indoctrinated? (But, any more than their American counterparts?) And wasn't the militarism of the battle dance vaguely repulsive? Though I share the Cuban view that war is often an unavoidable step on the road to social change, it is at best a grim business, and I was saddened to see children being led to think of it as glorious, even beautiful.

I also wondered frequently how typical were the things I was shown. The Cubans admitted we were seeing the best the island had to offer: they said we should regard the handsome hospitals, schools, etc., as representative of the revolution's goals. But I would have liked a clearer view of the revolution's present condition. For example, what goes on in Pioneer palaces less opulent than the one in Camagüey? Are the children equally poised, accomplished? (To American eyes they seem mature far beyond their years.) Or are the Camagüey Pioneers so accustomed to receiving visitors that their extraordinary qualities in fact distort as much as they reveal?

In order to get a less glossy picture, I began wandering away from the brigade. Without exception the people I met were enthusiastic about the revolution—especially the blacks and women, who along with the peasants have advanced most dramatically. (Some brigade members, however, did meet Cubans who were dissatisfied with socialism and wanted to leave.) One black waitress boasted that her first son, born when she was 12, was about to graduate from the military academy as an engineer. A shoe-shine man, the only one I saw in the streets of Cuba, turned out to be a stevedore making a few *pesos* in his off-hours. A doctor whose father had been a taxi driver observed that, had it not been for the revolution, she would have stayed home until she was married, and then devoted her life to caring for a horde of children.

The Cubans often pointed out a certain meanness of outlook that I had brought with me from the United States. One day I asked José, a medical student from Havana who worked with the brigade, whether he ever considered that by doing voluntary labor he might be advancing his career—that it might help him get into the party, or give him a wider choice of where to practice medicine. "Listen," he said, "I am a human being with human desires. I would like to have a car, to dress well, to do the kind of medicine I like best. And I want to be a doctor partly because it pays well, and because of the status it gives me. But you have to look at it dialectically. I have my desires—but they are shaped by society. If the society, like Cuba, truly values working in common, then those values become my values. Of course I know that my voluntary work will win approval. That doesn't make my desire to do it any less real."

On other matters José proved more myopic. He questioned me endlessly about politics: what did I think about Carter? About China? About the USSR? Confessing my coolness toward the last, I mentioned Stalin. José smiled. "Well," he said, "I must tell you that I love Stalin. And I'll tell you why. Stalin may have made mistakes, and he may even have held back Soviet development. But during World War II the country needed a strong leader to save socialism, and Stalin was the only man who could have done that." As for Communist China, José said he hadn't read much, but it was enough to know he didn't need to read any more. When I suggested this might be because he had only one source of opinion —the party—he challenged me to name any Soviet foreign policy outrages that matched China's support of Pinochet. I cited the Hitler-Stalin pact, Hungary, Czechoslovakia. José felt all were justified: for example, he saw the Prague Spring as a CIA plot. He would not even entertain the notion that Cuba's utter dependence on the USSR might influence the ideology of the Cuban Communists, and thus the information José received.

The press, in fact, is dismayingly bad. Newspapers and magazines have a primarily ideological function, and maintain a numbing tone of optimistic militancy. Their reports focus on conferences, new factories, exemplary workers, speeches by party officials, and the like. There is relatively little news as Americans know it—and while the lack of a Cuban *New York Times*, valuable for the sheer quantity of news it delivers, can perhaps be ascribed to the country's poverty, the papers also avoid any mention of *conflict*, except between such officially sanctioned enemies as imperialism and the Third World. There is rarely a sign that Cubans might disagree among themselves on any important issue, but every newspaper I saw during my stay contained at least one slashing attack on President Carter's human rights campaign.

One thus senses control in Cuba, but not oppression. The Communist Party controls the state apparatus, its policies, and its means of communication. To some degree this enables the party to shape the thoughts and experience of the nation (though this, too, is a dialectical process, since party members are nominated by their peers). I sensed none of the fear that is so palpable in police states. I never felt watched or followed, and I saw fewer police than one sees in New York, let alone Spain. Yet one incident did suggest the exercise of arbitrary power. Midway through the tour, the journalists were suddenly informed that we would have to ride all together on one bus. The Cubans said this would give us better access to the press liaison. Some of us, however, had made friends on other buses, and felt that our being singled out for special handling could only increase the *brigadistas'* profound mistrust of the press. The Cubans listened to our protests, smiled, and insisted. We never learned the reason for the order, though it clearly made it easier to keep track of us. Sensitive as I was toward any curtailment, I spent the next days nursing dark suspicions that every Cuban on the brigade was a member of the secret police.

Such are the dilemmas of a reporter with a liberal background in Cuba; he or she is not likely to return with uncomplicated thoughts. In my case, few of the misgiv-

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ings I took with me were eased. Clearly the Cubans have not solved the contradiction between the ideals of economic equality and the fullest exercise of personal liberty. The opportunities for abuse in a society where one political party provides "overall guidance to the state" (to quote the pamphlet *Democracy in Cuba*) are too obvious, and have been acted on too many times to be ignored. The matter of political prisoners remains; their number is variously estimated between 2,000 (the figure Castro gave Barbara Walters) and 50,000. The Cubans on the brigade simply refused to supply information about them.

And yet I found returning to New York from Cuba a surprisingly painful experience. For a week I felt shaken and resentful; the hucksterism and predatory atmosphere of the city seemed intolerable. It was not that I had shed the bourgeois traits that made Cuba problematic for me. Rather it was that, while in Cuba, wrestling with my demons and trying to peer through the brigade's fog of boosterism, I had hardly noticed how deeply I was moved by the transformation of the society. All else aside, the Cubans are a poverty-stricken people who have taken the extremely daring step of seizing their country for themselves. That step cut them loose from all comfortable moorings and embarked them onto social and political seas still largely uncharted. Their obvious joy in the effort is a privilege to witness.

In his classic book, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, Harry Braverman writes: "In Soviet society, we have the first phenomenal form of an epoch of transition which may well last for centuries and will undoubtedly exhibit many complex, contradictory and transitional forms." In other words, the world may be headed toward a communitarian future, but it is headed there slowly; and one cannot expect that just sixty years after the October Revolution, any attempt at socialism would be perfected. One might then cautiously paraphrase Steffens: in Cuba I caught a glimpse of the future, or something like it; and so far it works better than anything else in Latin America.

That is no small achievement for a revolution still in its teens. □

MIDWIVES vs. DOCTORS

WHO CAN DELIVER A BABY?

MARY BARNETT

When women in labor were turned away from emergency wards in Santa Cruz County, California, hospitals and organized medicine showed no alarm. The County Medical Society was unruffled by this maternity-care crisis, brought on by the shortage of obstetricians, the unwillingness of most of them to deliver the babies of Medi-Cal (California's form of Medicaid) patients for less than their private fees, and the refusal of general practitioners to deliver any babies at all because of high malpractice insurance rates.

But when in mid-1976 Santa Cruz County obtained a state grant of $143,000 to provide perinatal care for low-income patients, the Medical Society suddenly discovered a threat to the health of the poor. Why? Because the program was to include the services of two nurse-midwives. A Santa Cruz County Medical Society bulletin quoted one doctor (unnamed) as declaring, "This is not a matter of government versus the private sector. We feel this is not the best medical care. We hate to see a person have a baby with a midwife because the person is poor. These people are entitled to the best we can give them."

The anonymous doctor had apparently forgotten that the best the community had been able to give some women was a list of emergency hospitals in adjacent counties. The medical staffs of Santa Cruz County's three hospitals—all private since the physician-endorsed closing of Santa Cruz General Hospital in 1973—voted overwhelmingly against granting delivery privileges to the county's midwives. A witness of the voting at Community Hospital reported: "There were approximately 100 doctors in the room, and when they called for 'yes' votes, I saw only one hand go up." (The hand belonged to a young obstetrician who had worked with midwives during his training.)

Although the medical community was not so quick to provide an alternative to deliveries by midwives, four obstetricians did finally agree to deliver babies for the full Medi-Cal fee of $150. Also, a nurse-midwife would be present throughout labor and delivery. County officials admitted some overlap in care and costs, but noted that state and federal funds were paying the bill and, besides, something had to be done.

The county's first nurse-midwife, Karen Laing, began conducting prenatal clinics and sitting with her first maternity patients throughout labor, in the time-honored tradition of the midwife. She watched quietly as obstetricians rushed in to "catch" the babies at the last moment. She didn't mention that, while on the Los Angeles County General Hospital staff, she had delivered as many as five babies a day, selecting as patients the women in the delivery ward who were screaming the loudest.

Like all of the approximately 1,800 certified nurse-midwives practicing in the United States, Laing is a registered nurse who in addition has completed a program in obstetrics approved by the American College of Nurse-Midwives and passed an ACNM certification examination. After receiving her bachelor's degree in nursing from California State University at Los Angeles and spending a year in maternity nursing, she obtained her

Mary Barnett is a free-lance writer living in Felton, Calif. She has been a reporter for the San Jose Mercury *and more recently has been contributing articles about hospitals and health care to several California newspapers.*

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master's in nursing from Columbia University. Altogether, she spent about six years training for her profession.

Although Santa Cruz doctors professed to see this quiet-spoken young woman as a threat to maternal and child health, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists does not agree. In 1971, faced with an impending shortage of obstetricians, it adopted the policy that, in medically directed teams, "qualified nurse-midwives may assume responsibility for the complete care and management of uncomplicated maternity patients."

Nurse-midwifery has been hailed by health planners as an answer not only to obstetrician shortages but to the ever increasing cost of having babies. The hourly compensation of nurse-midwives is, of course, lower than that of obstetricians, but nurse-midwives are more than cheap substitutes for doctors. Women able to afford the best of care are today seeking out nurse-midwives. They like their approach to childbirth. Helping at a normal birth is what nurse-midwifery is all about, whereas for the average obstetrician, highly trained in pathology, it's a bore. Women like the way a nurse-midwife stays with the mother throughout labor, offering support and comfort. In part because of this support, mothers delivered by nurse-midwives require pain-relieving drugs less frequently, and in smaller amounts, than do mothers attended by doctors. It is increasingly recognized that overmedication endangers the infant. In this respect, nurse-midwife deliveries tend to be safer.

Approximately 80 percent of the babies in the world are delivered by midwives. Such deliveries are common not only in underdeveloped countries but in Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Holland and Japan—nations that have a better record than the United States for lowering infant mortality rates. The United States is, in fact, the only nation that has ever outlawed midwives. Only here have midwives been denounced as part of the campaign to reduce infant mortality; other advanced nations chose instead to upgrade the midwifery profession. Sweden, which for a number of years has had the lowest infant mortality rate in the world, licensed midwives in the mid-1800s. England, which also excels the United States in this area of medicine, did so in 1903.

Doctors like to point out that, after they took over most infant deliveries in this country, mortality rates dropped. True, but they didn't drop as much as they did in sixteen other nations. In control of infant mortality, the United States ranks seventeenth. Top-ranking Sweden reported 9.6 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1974 as compared to 16.7 in the United States. In Sweden, most normal births are attended by nurse-midwives. Obstetricians there concentrate on complicated deliveries.

In the face of such facts, how could the Santa Cruz medical community react with such alarm to the introduction of two certified nurse-midwives to help meet a crisis in maternity care? Was the Santa Cruz reaction unusual or typical?

The answer is that it was old-fashioned. In America today, nurse-midwifery is still controversial, but gaining ground. Nurse-midwives practice in eighteen New York City hospitals, but may not practice in four states. Nurse-midwifery supporters are optimistic, but there's a way to go before every woman who wants a nurse-midwife can have one.

"I've heard worse," was the terse comment on the Santa Cruz fracas by Dorothea Lang, president of the American College of Nurse Midwives and director of midwifery services for the New York City Public Health Service. "At least, she's there in the hospital. In Washington, D.C., a nurse-midwife tried four or five hospitals and none of them would let her in, even under supervision."

"Nurse-midwives are not accepted yet," admits Peggy Emrey, nurse-midwifery consultant for the California Department of Health, who helped set up the Santa Cruz perinatal program. "There is some insecurity and professional jealousy, and some ignorance too. Many doctors have no conception of what nurse-midwives can do. Then there's the whole traditional thing. Hospital privileges go only to M.D.s. It's not just the nurse-midwife—where is it going to end? Doctors see nurse-midwives as opening the floodgates. Who's to say physicians' assistants can't admit patients? They could probably do appendectomies as well as doctors. The M.D.s see themselves losing their high, exclusive status."

Although Emrey says nurse-midwifery programs usually work out well if they are allowed to get started at all, she reports that in a number of California communities they are being kept out by community and physician resistance. One place where midwifery worked out very well indeed—and where it no longer exists—is Madera County, California, north of Fresno in the state's agricultural heartland, the San Joaquin Valley. During a three-year, state-funded demonstration program at Madera County Hospital from July 1960 through June 1963, two nurse-midwives achieved a remarkable reduction in infant mortality. The program ended because the Council of the California Medical Association failed to recommend changes in state law that would allow nurse-midwives to perform normal deliveries under medical supervision. Within a year the prematurity rate lapsed from 6.6 to 9.8 percent and the neonatal (first twenty-eight days) mortality rate rose from 10.3 to 32.1 per 1,000 live births.

In the United States, no state or jurisdiction has banned nurse-midwifery by statute, but its legal status is complicated. The Summer 1976 issue of the *Journal of Nurse-Midwifery* devoted 57 pages to summarizing legislation on the subject in the United States. At the time, five states —Alabama, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri and Wisconsin—interpreted existing laws in ways to ban nurse-midwife practice. Alabama has since legalized nurse-midwifery, and legislation to do so is pending in Massachusetts. Twenty-three states specifically recognize midwifery in laws or official regulations. In nine others, nurse-midwives practice fully but without official or legislative recognition.

In seventeen states that have permissive laws, nurse-midwives do not practice to their full skill, and the

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ACNM is trying to find out why. Suspected reasons: the conservative attitudes of doctors, hospital administrators and nursing leaders; the restrictive third-party payment policies of insurance companies; unsuitable salaries and working conditions.

Even in states with permissive laws and full nurse-midwife practice, resistance remains. California is credited with having a model law, passed in 1974, which specifically legalizes the practice of nurse-midwifery. It permits nurse-midwives, under physician supervision, "to attend cases of normal childbirth and provide prenatal, intrapartum and postpartum care, including family-planning care, for the mother, and immediate care for the newborn." A physician's supervision does not require his actual presence. But the model law didn't keep Santa Cruz from barring nurse-midwife deliveries, nor has it kept other jurisdictions from excluding nurse-midwives altogether.

A survey of hospital directors in various parts of the nation indicates that, even where nurse-midwives are recognized as having a function, there is a tendency to think of them as second-rate substitutes for obstetricians —good enough for poor people who can't afford anything better or women in isolated rural areas where no doctor is likely to venture.

A less-than-successful attempt to introduce midwifery at Kaiser Hospital in Portland, Ore. was discussed in a study by Jane Cassels Record and Mervyn R. Greenlick of the Kaiser staff, published in the Fall 1976, *Journal of Nurse-Midwifery*. They found physicians to be strongly influenced by their "degree of role-challenge" in accepting or rejecting such aides as physicians' assistants, certificated nurse-midwives and pediatric nurse-practitioners.

In 1970, Kaiser added a pediatric nurse-practitioner, a physicians' assistant and a certified nurse-midwife to the staff. Three years later, there were seven physicians' assistants but only two nurse-midwives and one nurse-practitioner. By 1976 only one nurse-midwife was left, assigned to treating minor gynecologic problems, giving routine pelvic examinations and generally working far below her skill. Yet the most pressing shortage of doctors was in obstetrics, and therefore nurse-midwifery should have expanded the most. Why didn't it? The authors thought that nurse-practitioners and especially the midwives were seen as threats to the physicians' role, while the physicians' assistants had "role-elevating" implications.

In Santa Cruz, Dr. Joseph Craig, the county health officer, reports that the doctors were unhappy about more than just the supposed "low level of care" they professed to fear midwives would provide. "The way they saw it, if the state had taken care of the malpractice insurance problem by limiting settlements as they did in Indiana, there would have been no need for the midwife program," he said. "Physicians would have been delivering the babies."

As Peggy Emrey says, "The doctors didn't see midwifery as providing another, and possibly better, kind of care." Indeed they did not. Nationally, many physicians still don't. And in America today, it doesn't pay to underestimate the power of the medical profession.

What are the answers for those who want to see midwifery spread as an alternative type of maternity care? Dorothea Lang, who has probably done as much as anyone living to promote midwifery, has some advice: "There is nothing more effective than community pressure. Consumers should write letters to members of hospital boards, and put pressure on the directors personally. For example, have the money-givers write them. That usually works."

She also wants any national health insurance bill to list professional midwifery services as a separate reimbursable category. Without that, she sees less chance that physicians will admit nurse-midwives to practice with them. No pending health insurance bill includes such a provision.

With patience and occasional pressure, Lang and her fellow nurse-midwives are confident that their profession —which they proudly assert is *really* the world's oldest— can take its proper place in the mainstream of health care in America. But they don't expect it to be easy. □

A CENTURY OF PYRRHIC VICTORIES

Indian Lawsuits and White Power

PETRA T. SHATTUCK & JILL NORGREN

Late in March a delegation of two Indian tribes from Maine, with their attorneys, were received at the White House. That, in itself, was news, for Indians have not often enjoyed the hospitality of the nation's Chief Executive. What made this meeting even more unusual, however, was that the Indians came to the White House not as supplicants but as litigants whose successful legal action has put them in a strong bargaining position.

As the result of a lawsuit filed against the United States Government in 1972, the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot Tribes have established a valid legal claim to nearly half the land in the state of Maine. The Indians argued that the "sale" of their land in 1794 to the state of Massachusetts—of which Maine was then still a part—was illegal, because the federal government failed to carry out its obligation under the Non-Intercourse Act

Petra Shattuck and Jill Norgren, assistant professors of government at John Jay College of Criminal Justice (City University of New York), are writing a book on the use of the courts by black and American Indian minorities. This article is a part of that study.

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of 1790. This Act imposed on the federal Executive the responsibility to supervise, and on Congress the duty to ratify, all land transactions between Indian tribes and non-Indians.

In the Maine case, Federal District Court Judge Edward T. Gignoux accepted the Indians' position and ordered the federal government to act as the Indians' legal trustee and to assume responsibility for pressing the land claims of the two tribes against the state of Maine. In late 1975, the Court of Appeals confirmed the decision of the lower court; the Justice Department decided not to appeal the Circuit Court's decision to the Supreme Court and began to prepare legal action on the land claims of the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot. At this point the state of Maine became the defendant in the government's lawsuit, which claimed, on the Indians' behalf, aboriginal title to 12.5 million acres of land and asked for $25 billion in back rents and damages.

Official and public reaction in Maine to the Indians' legal victory has been negative. It is hardly surprising. By casting doubt on the validity of existing property titles, the pending litigation has had significant economic impact on the areas claimed. Local communities have had trouble selling municipal bonds; some large real estate developments have been delayed because title insurance, and therefore mortgages, are not available. The lawsuit of the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy has thus created insecurity, fear and, most of all, an angry sense of injustice that the people of the state who bought land and built homes "in good faith" are now threatened by land claims nearly two centuries old. Long-delayed justice for the Indians, it appears, can only mean less than perfect justice for the citizens and state of Maine.

Meanwhile, the once-reluctant Justice Department attorneys who are now handling the controversial case have emphasized the complex legal dilemma raised by the clash of rights and obligations. On the ground that "litigation is not the best method to resolve the issues," the District Court has been petitioned twice for delay of further legal action in order to allow all parties to the suit to reach an out-of-court settlement.

The recent meeting at the White House was held to discuss a possible basis for settlement. The opposing parties submitted proposals to Justice William B. Gunther, recently retired from the Georgia Supreme Court, whom President Carter had appointed special mediator for the occasion. While agreement to meet at the President's invitation indicates a minimal consensus that negotiations should at least be attempted, the settlement of the Indians' claims will not be easy. Few details are known about the demands put forward at the White House by Maine and the Indians, but both sides have on several occasions stated clearly conflicting positions. Maine's Attorney General, Joseph E. Brennan, has repeatedly attacked the Indians' case as totally without merit and has categorically refused to discuss the return of any land. But the return of a significant land base is precisely what the Indians expect and demand. Tribal leaders, who have already assured small property holders that no legal claims will be pressed against them "as a matter of grace," have nevertheless insisted that Indians can obtain a position of independence and importance "only by recovering an important land base." Indeed, the demand for some land is an integral part of the litigation of the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy, who insist on restoration of rights and not merely compensation for their violation. This element of Indian litigation is the reason why cases like that of the Maine tribes are politically explosive: reconciliation of Indian demands for redress of past injustices and of white demands to prevent the imposition of new inequities will be extremely difficult. Justice Gunther's recommendations for settlement—to be submitted to the President—will show what and where the limits of negotiation are.

Whether the Maine Indians' case can be settled out of court and whether it can be settled to the satisfaction of all parties will have significance far beyond the immediate concerns of this lawsuit, important as those are. The public attention focused on this case—heightened by the recent retainer of such prominent counsel as Archibald Cox by the Indians and Edward Bennett Williams by Maine, the involvement of the White House and the very magnitude of the Indians' claim—have all made the case of the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy something of a test case. Its outcome is therefore watched closely by all those involved in other Indian lawsuits that demand the return of lands unlawfully taken. Of these, there are many.

On Martha's Vineyard 200 acres of land, including the cliffs of Gay Head, were turned over to the Wampanoag Indian Tribe which had sued in Federal District Court in Boston for title to the land under the 1790 Non-Intercourse Act. A similar suit was filed by another branch of the Wampanoag at Mashpee on Cape Cod; it asked for the return of 17,000 acres. The Narragansett Indians have filed suit against Rhode Island; and litigation over Indian land claims is pending against Connecticut, New York and South Carolina. Recent legal victories of Western tribes have been equally important in gaining control over or access to scarce water supplies and natural resources and in winning off-reservation fishing and hunting rights. In the last decade federal court rulings also have strengthened the concept of tribal sovereignty by exempting tribal Indians from local tax and licensing requirements, and protecting the imposition of tribal authority over non-Indians transgressing tribal law.

All of these legal advances seem to prove that Indian tribes and their lawyers chose wisely when they relied on courts rather than on political pressure or direct confrontation. Attempts to use regular political channels to reverse policies detrimental to Indian interests have generally been expensive and unproductive. Unconventional means, such as the seizure of Alcatraz and Wounded Knee, have drawn national attention to the Indians' plight, but the direct results of such militant actions have not markedly altered the position of the Indians. For these reasons, and possibly stimulated by the legal successes of the black civil rights movement, Indian rights' activists are now turning to judicial forums. As Tom Tureen, counsel for the Maine Indians, puts it, "The courts have

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treated Indians more fairly than any other non-Indian institution or government."

The promise of effective legal action has led to a dramatic increase in the number of Indian rights lawyers who are litigating Indian cases. As of 1971, the Native American Rights Fund of Boulder, Colo., has been acting as the Indians' own public interest law firm. Lawsuits brought in the past decade are estimated to have increased five or sixfold. Indeed, Bertram E. Hirsch, a staff attorney for the Association on American Indian Affairs, believes it likely "that more Indian cases have been brought since 1965 than were litigated in all the previous history of the U.S. judicial system."

Legal decisions in favor of the Indians have for the first time raised the possibility of improving the dismal economic and social position of a minority that ranks at the bottom of every indicator of well-being. The implementation of such decisions could raise the Indian tribes from the status of weak and impotent minorities to that of more equal bargaining partners in the political process. In short, the actual realization of legal gains could signal a turning point in the history of the American Indian. But those high hopes rest on the premise that legal victories can and will finally become political reality. Whether that will happen is as yet an open question. Both historical experience and the current groundswell of political hostility to Indian gains justify skepticism about the outcome of litigation which has begun so auspiciously.

History offers ample evidence that the prospects for defending Indian legal victories against strong political opposition are not good. In the past, Indians have repeatedly discovered that judicial decisions in their favor were ignored with impunity. Their experience makes it clear that faith in the power of judicial institutions to protect the rights of politically weak groups against loud and strong majority demands is easily misplaced. The legal victories, but political defeat, of the Ponca and Cherokee are cases in point.

On May 19, 1879, Ponca Chief Standing Bear was granted a writ of *habeas corpus* by the U.S. District Court for Nebraska. The military, Judge Elmer S. Dundy ruled, had no right to arrest the chief of the Ponca because he resisted the forced removal of his tribe from lands guaranteed and protected by law and treaty. Jubilant over his release from custody, Standing Bear put his tomahawk at the feet of the lawyers, who had argued his case:

> Hitherto, when we have been wronged we went to war to assert our rights and avenge our wrongs. We took the tomahawk. . . . But you have found a better way. You have gone into court for us, and I find that our wrongs can be righted there! Now I have no more use for the tomahawk. I want to lay it down forever.

Standing Bear spoke too soon: his legal opposition to removal was fruitless. Claiming that the courts had no jurisdiction over Indians, the federal government proceeded with the forcible removal of the Ponca to Indian territory.

Nearly half a century earlier, in 1831-32, the Cherokee Nation, too, had appealed to the Supreme Court for help against the unprovoked and ruthless aggression of the state of Georgia. The state legislature and the Governor were determined, whatever the law said, to seize the land of the Cherokee and drive them from their homes. The Indians won their case against Georgia, Chief Justice John Marshall ruling that Georgia was "in plain violation"

Illustrated London News (1863)
Chief Francis of the Passamaquoddy

of the laws, that the land belonged to the Cherokee, and that it was the federal government's duty to protect the Indians from the state's lawless acts. Elias Boudinot, one of the Cherokee leaders, greeted the decision as "glorious news." He believed that Marshall's ruling had forever settled the question of "who was right and who was wrong," that it could create "a new era on the Indian question."

But neither Georgia officials nor the federal government saw fit to enforce the Court's decision. When the Cherokee applied to President Jackson for the help which the Court had said he owed them, "Old Hickory" turned the Indian delegation away from the White House. He responded to their legal victory with arrogant cynicism: "John Marshall has ruled," he said, "now let him go and enforce his decision." By the end of the decade which had begun with the Cherokee's sovereign legal challenge to Georgia before the Supreme Court, the Indians were rounded up and driven from their ancestral homes and prosperous lands by state and federal troops. Only two-thirds of them survived the brutal forced march over

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the "trail of tears" to arid lands west of the Mississippi.

Then, and many times since, Indians have turned to the courts because they expect the U.S. Government and its citizens to abide by their own laws. But repeatedly over the 19th century the tragic course of the Indians demonstrated that neither laws, nor treaties, nor constitutional provisions could protect their lands or rights against land-hungry, aggressive settlers, endowed with superior force and convinced of their moral and racial superiority. No matter how valid their claims, how just their cause, the courts could not, in the words of a sympathetic but realistic Chief Justice John Marshall, "redress the past or prevent the future."

For a century and a half after the Supreme Court had ruled that Indian land should not be taken in violation of laws and treaties, Indians were forcibly removed to reservations, and then even the land of the reservations was seized. As long as neither the President nor Congress was willing to enforce judicial decisions Indians could not exercise their legal rights. And neither Congress nor the Executive has shown much inclination to protect the rights of politically impotent Indian minorities. President Jackson's contempt for the Cherokee forecast a century of federal Indian policy based on the maxim that Indian rights need not matter. Thus, whether or not the stunning legal victories of the Penobscot, the Passamaquoddy and other tribes will fare better than those of their hapless predecessors depends largely on the ability and willingness of the negotiators at the White House—and eventually Congress—to uphold legal decisions in the face of adverse majority pressures.

These pressures will not be easy to resist. The political and public response to the assertion of Indian rights has been growing more hostile, much of it based on an understandable fear of the economic consequence of pending land claims, and the frustration of small property owners hamstrung by the uncertainty of their legal title. Some communities have reacted to Indian assertion of rights with a vindictiveness entirely out of proportion to any harm that might be inflicted on them by Indian claims. How bitter the hostility can become, and how tragic the consequences for Indians, was indicated by an incident in Oneida, N.Y. There, a middle-aged Indian couple living on a tract of land that was under jurisdictional dispute between the Oneida Warrior society and the city were killed in a fire after city police and fire officials refused to respond to repeated calls for help.

Fortunately the reaction of other communities affected by Indian litigation has been less ruthless. At Mashpee, relations between the town's nearly 3,000 white residents and its 600 Indians have deteriorated rapidly as a result of the lawsuit filed by the Wampanoag last summer. Rejecting responsibility for "what our ancestors did to the Indians more than 100 years ago," the town's selectman, Kevin O'Connell, accuses the Indians of wanting to take away the non-Indians' homes and businesses. There are reports of growing prejudice against Indians even among children.

In addition to hiring legal luminaries—Mashpee has engaged James St. Clair of Watergate fame—those affected by Indian claims have begun to organize politically in an attempt to persuade Congress that it should impose monetary settlements (which the federal government would pay) on the disputes, but bar the return of real assets to the Indians. About the time the Maine settlement negotiations began at the White House, Representatives from nine states where Indian claims have been made—Utah, Montana, South Dakota, Wisconsin, South Carolina, Maine, New York, Rhode Island and Massachusetts—were meeting in Mashpee to organize their opposition.

Nor are land titles the only claims at issue. Where Indian legal victories have seemed to threaten, commercial and business interests have been quick to lobby for Congressional action. In response to a Federal District Court's affirmation of the hunting and fishing rights of several Indian tribes in the state of Washington, *Fishing and Hunting News* launched a massive campaign. Although District Court Judge George Boldt had decided "that there was no reason to believe that a ruling which grants the Indians their full treaty rights will affect the necessary escapement of fish in the least," the National Wildlife Federation passed a resolution urging the federal government to strip American Indians of their reserved hunting and fishing rights. There is no indication anywhere that the wishes and priorities of the affected Indians are to be taken into consideration.

So far, the reaction of the state of Maine has been typical. State officials insist that the Indians' lawsuit is without legal merit. Instead, the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot are accused of litigating in order to use economic "blackmail" against the state and its people, and Attorney General Brennan has vowed not to allow the return of any land to the tribes. The maximum concession Mr. Brennan is willing to make is to discuss with the Indians "any proposal that might permit the tribes to pursue their claim in court without causing the state financial distress." It is apparent why such a solution would please Maine, but less clear why the Indians should want to agree to a proposal which would not only prevent them from realizing the chief goal of their suit—return of their land—but also ask them to accept the novel legal doctrine that litigation must not cause the defendant any distress.

State officials have urged federal legislation to validate currently held titles to disputed lands and to allow the Indians to sue the federal government only for money damages, a solution that would make the Indian litigation painless for the state. Maine's Congressional delegation, led by Senators Hathaway and Muskie, promptly introduced such legislation. The proposed State of Maine Aboriginal Claims Act of 1977 (S.842) would limit the remedy available to the Indians to monetary damages and extinguish "aboriginal title, or right to use and occupancy, to the land." Although Hathaway and Muskie have stated that their proposed legislation is intended neither "to be a judgment on the legal merits one way or the other" nor meant "to any way prejudge the litigation between the tribes and the state of Maine," it is difficult to see how *ex post facto* Congressional extinction

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of Indian land title—in the midst of pending litigation—could fail to influence the outcome of the lawsuit of the Passamaquoddy and the Penobscot.

Against such unilateral Congressional action, however, the Maine Indians would appear to have no remedy, for the courts have thus far refused to invalidate the time-honored Congressional practice of breaking "binding" treaty obligations to the Indians by adopting new statutes to override old treaty commitments whenever that seemed convenient. Senator Muskie's remarks in the Senate that "Since there is simply no equitable way to disown these people [innocent citizens of Maine], the claims of the Indians must not be allowed to include the return of the land," reflects the view that it is more equitable—and certainly easier—to deprive the Indians of their legal title than to negotiate a settlement where both sides would relinquish some of their rights.

The progress of Indian rights—so far measured largely by judicial decisions—depends in any real sense on the transformation of legal victories into effective political commitments. The distance from one to the other may be too great to be bridged by the Indians, who lack both meaningful access to the political system and strong allies who would work on their behalf. Without either, the attempt to implement judicial decisions that reallocate increasingly scarce resources to the Indian minority at the expense of the majority may well be futile.

In this context, an analogy to the civil rights experiences of the blacks is tempting but dubious. In political terms the unequal size of the two minorities is important. Blacks make up 11.1 percent of the population; Indians number only one-third of 1 percent. Once blacks had gained the right to vote, their numerical strength was sufficient for them to wield political power in their own right—as was most recently demonstrated by their decisive vote in the Carter election. No such opportunity seems available to the Indians. And so far their attempts to enlist non-Indian support for their legal and political goals can in no way compare to the systematic building of black-white alliances so effectively organized by the NAACP and other black civil rights organizations.

Another, as it were accidental, factor is likely to have a bearing on the ultimate success of the Maine Indians' litigation. That is, the timing of their legal offensive. Indian lawsuits, brought now in the wake of black successes gained in the Warren Court, are likely to suffer from the distinct reorientation of the Burger Court with respect to the federal judiciary's special responsibility to protect the rights of politically powerless and disenfranchised groups. Lower court victories like that of the Passamaquoddy and Penobscot may reach the Supreme Court at a time of its growing inaccessibility to claims by the poor and minorities. Chief Justice Burger has stated his belief that the courts should not be "the route by which basic change should be accomplished in a country like ours." That such a position does not promise well for the Indians was demonstrated by the Court's rejection in April of Indian claims in the case of the Rosebud Sioux. The majority's decision—providing legal sanction for Congressional statutes that permitted the sale of reservation land in violation of prior treaties—does not promise a friendly reception for the Maine Indians' claim should it reach the Court after White House negotiations had failed.

At this time, therefore, the most crucial questions concern settlement negotiations at the White House. Their outcome will indicate whether the government is prepared to respect the right of Indians despite their political weakness, or to disregard them because of it. The Maine Indians are threatened by the same vast imbalance of power between them and the majority that in the 19th century proved fatal to the Cherokee. Indeed, it can be argued that Indians are weaker today than their predecessors were then. They are fewer, poorer and less autonomous. Present concerns over shrinking resources, material shortages and environmental protection may exacerbate their political weakness.

It is no small irony that the legal claims of the Maine Indians are based on the "direct authority" of the Supreme Court's decision in favor of the Cherokee. With historical innocence, Justice Department lawyers cite Justice John Marshall's opinion as if that legal victory had not been a mirage, the fateful beginning of the forced removal of the Cherokee from their homelands in Georgia. Only lawyers so blithely ignore the failures of the law and believe that a decision which failed to protect a strong and self-reliant Indian Nation then can be the foundation of Indian rights now. The appointment of a judge from Georgia to mediate between the Maine Indians and their non-Indian opponents serves only to add to the irony.

We are a legalistic society, one that often seeks legal cures for political or social problems. But when victims of political or social injustice turn to courts for help we frequently do not like judicial solutions, and so defy them. Indian lawsuits pose complex social and political dilemmas. Justice for the Indians should not ignore the deep attachment of Maine's non-Indian people to the land. The Indians have shown awareness and concern for these feelings by their willingness not to pursue legal claims against small homeowners. This concession so far has not been met by an equally significant good-faith offer to respect Indian demands for return of at least some land. Unless such real give-and-take is negotiated in political forums, the Maine Indians' legal victory stands in danger of being ignored. Their case may well become another example of politics in disregard of the law. Tom Tureen believes that "the hardest part of the case is over" once the legal issues are decided. Historical experience suggests he may be wrong. □

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CURIOUS CASE OF AN IRS AGENT

JOHN P. HAYES

President Carter may have returned that historic plaque of "The Buck Stops Here" to the Oval Office, but he certainly hasn't dealt with the catch in Harry Truman's famous motto. Before a President can stop the buck he must first have it passed to him. The problem in the nation's capital, as most American Government watchers have recognized for too long, is that few bucks get passed upward in the White House (or for that matter, Congress). And, whether Mr. Carter knows it or not, the buck continues to be passed downward in his White House. Is it any wonder Americans are apathetic about their government?

Actually that Truman phrase is a bit ludicrous in 1977, as indeed it probably was during Mr. Truman's administration. Today's government is such a hodgepodge in which the buck is passed laterally and diagonally and circularly at so many subordinate levels that it's impossible for the President to keep abreast of even the important issues—and everyone considers his issue important. Granted, I may be simplifying Mr. Truman's slogan, but Mr. Carter has been promising to deal with the issues —particularly the issues of human rights—and a recent experience of mine baffles me about the Carter White House.

"The Curious Case of Andrew Susce" is an investigative article that I wrote for the February 1977 issue of *Pittsburgh*. It details the lonely and bitter fight, a 30-year fight, of an American citizen against his government. To summarize the article, Andrew Susce, 70, of Newton Falls, Ohio and formerly of Pittsburgh, was fired in the mid-1940s by the United States Internal Revenue Service. The reason given for his discharge was insubordination, but the circumstances surrounding the action have never been fully revealed to him, nor has he ever been allowed a proper opportunity to explain his actions.

Actually, Mr. Susce was fired for performing too adequately, a deadly mistake in the rot-ridden IRS of the 1940s. His performance (for the government) has been corroborated by Richard L. Thornburgh, former U.S. Attorney in Pittsburgh and thereafter Assistant Attorney General in the Justice Department under President Ford. Even Mr. Ford, in a letter to Susce, said he recognized some "curiosity" in the Susce matter. Later, one of the President's staff attorneys wrote that Susce's work was very important to the government and that he had performed admirably. Yet, no one has cleared Andrew Susce of what he considers a dishonorable, unjust and vindictive dismissal.

In 1940 Susce was appointed a zone deputy collector of the IRS, working out of the Pittsburgh office. He considered the appointment "an honor to my family. . . . I yearned to become an honest public servant." About three years into his government career, he was ordered to investigate possible tax evasion by John Sebastian LaRocca, believed to be the Mafia boss of southwestern Pennsylvania. Despite Susce's protests that he was not qualified for such an investigation (which should have been handled by the IRS Intelligence Division), he uncovered a wealth of information that "could have put organized crime out of business in Pittsburgh," according to Mr. Thornburgh.

As it turned out, however, Susce's findings were never to be heard inside a courtroom—at least not while they could be most effective. His superiors, who appear to have been covering for Mr. LaRocca, as well as other mobsters and venal civil servants (implicated by Susce), filed Susce's investigation in an IRS office in Philadelphia. The Susce Report, as the ditched investigation was eventually tagged, was not found until 1953, when then Sen. John J. Williams, informed of the report by its author, brought the issue to the floor of Congress and demanded that the Susce Report be brought to him. After ten years (with the statute of limitations expired), the report was finally turned over to federal investigators in Pittsburgh, where Thornburgh eventually used it (and it's being used to this day) for background information in several mob prosecutions.

Since 1943, when he was fired and forced to move his family to Ohio for their safety, Susce has been nagging government officials to review his case and clear him. Rarely, however, has he made any progress in his one-man battle. Occasionally he has reached the lair of Congressmen, including then Rep. Gerald R. Ford, and Senators, including the late Robert Kennedy. On a few occasions, but mainly because he has been an active and loyal grass-roots Republican, Susce penetrated the Oval Offices of Mr. Nixon and Mr. Ford. These public figures, and a dozen others, wrote him sympathetic letters and said they would help him. They invariably, and too conveniently, passed the buck to the IRS. The interminable answer from the IRS is: Mr. Susce's case is considered closed.

If there is anything good to be said about Richard Nixon, it's that, this time at least, he accepted the buck. That's more than is true of Mr. Carter. Shortly after my article appeared, I sent a copy to the President with a brief letter asking him to read "The Curious Case of Andrew Susce" and, after further investigation (and if it so warranted), to recognize Susce for his valor and clear him. Several weeks later I received a government form letter that carried a file number for the Susce case. "Please refer to this number in any future correspondence," read a pre-printed notation. "Mr. Hayes wrote in reference to Mr. Susce" was another notation on the form, addressed to no one in particular. The impersonality of it all outraged me and for a few moments I, too, felt

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John Hayes, who teaches in the Journalism Department at Temple University, was recently awarded a grant from the Sabre Journalism Foundation to investigate practices by the United States Internal Revenue Service that infringe on civil liberties.

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quite apathetic. After I had spent several months researching and writing the article and, more painfully, Susce had spent thirty years of his life tormented by the issue, I was insulted. President Carter has disappointed me.

Even more irritating was a second reply from the government, this from the Internal Revenue Service. It was not as impersonal as the first—it was not a form letter and it was signed. "Mr. Susce's case has been thoroughly reviewed during the past years. . . . Mr. Susce's allegations have been without foundation and credibility. . . . We, therefore, consider the case closed." Again, the buck had been passed downward. My letter, with a copy of "The Curious Case of Andrew Susce" attached, had been mailed to the newly appointed Commissioner of IRS, Jerry Kurtz. I thought he might want to begin his administration with a gesture of humanity by clearing Andrew Susce; certainly the IRS could use some humanity. Apparently I was wrong.

So what does it take for the average citizen to get a hearing from the United States Government? Won't anyone come to the aid of Andrew Susce? Is it necessary for us to buy our way into the Oval Office through favors or money? And if so, hasn't Mr. Susce paid his dues? Perhaps, Mr. Carter will tell us all how we *should* pass the buck to him? □

AFTER THE STRIP FLOODS

RELIEF IS THE REAL DISASTER

ROBERT E. WISE Jr.

When three April days of driving rains and flooding rivers churned the mountainous regions of West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee into a national disaster area (see "The Great Strip Mine Flood" by Phil Primack, *The Nation*, June 4), residents surveying their wrecked homes thought the worst had passed. For many rescue has been as much an ordeal as the flood.

"We've had two disasters here," said Jim Bartlett, a blue-jeaned and gray-haired community college professor in Mingo County, West Virginia. "One was the flood and the second was the federal relief effort."

Mingo County, dubbed the center of "the billion-dollar coal field," was one of the areas hardest hit. Ten feet of water covered the county seat of Williamson, population 6,500, when the usually placid Tug River crested at 60 feet above normal. More than 2,000 homes were destroyed in this county that already labored under a critical housing shortage. In the four-state region, the receding waters left 18,000 homes and 1,600 business places destroyed or damaged.

The immediate Presidential designation as a "national disaster area" brought another flood, this time of Washington and Philadelphia bureaucrats from the Federal Disaster Assistance Administration (FDAA), Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Small Business Administration (SBA), American Red Cross and Internal Revenue Service.

Two months later, many flood victims still live in condemned houses, Mingo County is constantly beset by HUD policy reversals and misleading statistics, and federal officials privately state that they have never seen a disaster relief operation so badly botched.

Obviously housing, both short term and permanent, was the first order of business. Hundreds of HUD mobile homes and emergency campers were lined up on a four-lane highway 20 miles from Williamson, yet few trickled into Mingo County until weeks after the flood. HUD blamed the mountain roads and steep terrain for the delay. Not completely true, claim the agency's frustrated field workers, who blame inefficient management for the problem. (HUD officialdom displays impressive efficiency in one area. At the first hint of employee criticism, the offender is transferred immediately to a distant HUD post.)

The Federal Disaster Relief Act authorizes HUD to house persons losing their homes in rent-free mobile homes for a year. The person may then purchase the mobile home at its fair market value. While most eligible persons are now under some type of HUD roof, in most cases a 7-by-16-foot camper-trailer, HUD plays a public relations game with statistics. Each week Paul Cain, the state coordinator for HUD's operations, announces how many more hundreds of families have been housed in mobile homes. What is not said is that most of these occupants lack complete utility services.

HUD mobile home inspector Fred Altice recently resigned in disgust, claiming that of the seventeen mobile homes on his caseload listed by HUD as "Occupied," five had complete utility hookups and only three had water and sewer connections. A young woman receiving a mobile home noted, "I was almost as well off in a tent we took down. The windows are broken, the cabinets are broken, and the doors are off. It looks like a flood victim itself."

These flood victims are also learning painfully about the new SBA interest rates. Victims of previous disasters have been eligible for SBA loans at 3 percent with the first $5,000 usually being forgiven—in effect a grant. But Congress recently abolished the forgiveness provisions and pegged all disaster loans at 6⅝ percent interest. The result is that persons whose homes were destroyed now must borrow SBA money at almost conventional

Robert Wise, a Charleston, W.Va. lawyer, has been working in the stricken districts of Appalachia, offering legal assistance to the flood victims. At the same time, he has been acting as a stringer for UPI.

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interest rates to pay off a mortgage for a house that no longer exists.

There are other reasons for the growing local resentment to the federal effort. Most of the HUD, FDAA and SBA workers live at motels away from the stricken areas, and Cain's command post is in a modern office building in Charleston, 90 miles from Williamson. Enraged because one HUD official was rarely present in the area, Mingo County Commissioner Gerald Chafin threatened to arrest him to compel an appearance.

Nor are the agencies communicating with one another as they could. SBA is still not sure whether or not Farmers Home Administration can make loans to flood victims at a lower interest rate. "They let us make loans for two weeks," fumed an SBA employee, "then come in saying they can save the day. They make us look like loan sharks."

There has not been much tramping through the mud to view these problems firsthand by the West Virginia Congressional delegation. The district's freshman Congressman, Nick Rahall, is periodically on the scene, but the state's two U.S. Senators, Robert Byrd and Jennings Randolph, have visited the stricken areas only once since the flood. Byrd's visit consisted of driving to the Williamson radio station for an interview, then out on the mud-covered streets for a few minutes of handshaking and photographs. When cornered by residents who pestered him about what he intended to do, the tight-lipped Byrd replied, "I didn't have to come down here, you know. I've seen floods before."

It is this attitude that causes many of the problems. Every agency involved has experienced other floods, so they have devised a procedure applicable to all disasters without accounting for local peculiarities. This approach also obviates the need to invite participation by the people most affected. When asked about involving the recent flood victims in housing decisions, HUD Secretary Patricia Harris noted "community relations is not our bag."

Perhaps it should be, since consulting people early can avoid stormy confrontations later. HUD's announcement that flood victims would be housed in giant mobile home parks did more to bring the citizenry together than a host of community organizers. Billed as "temporary," these congested parks often become permanent fixtures, long rows of rapidly depreciating "tin can" housing whose occupants agonize at each year's end while the government deliberates whether to renew its lease for the land.

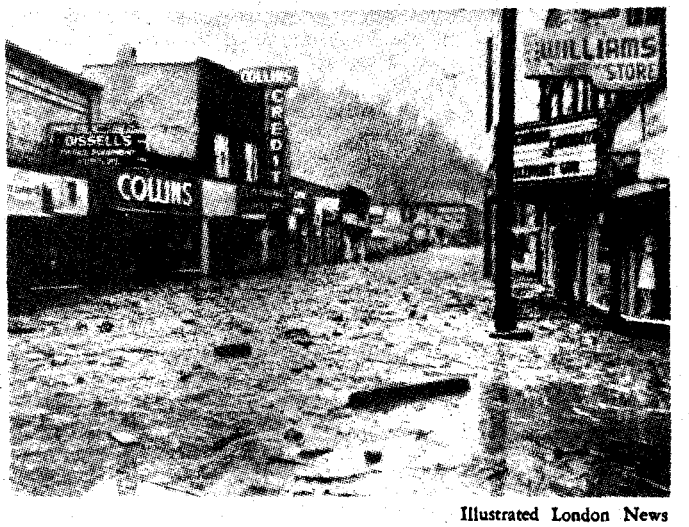
Moving into a metal ghetto was simply unacceptable to many flood victims. There is a deep psychological commitment to one's own land in Appalachia. Also, people wanted to begin rebuilding on their property. So why not place the mobile homes on individual pieces of property instead of herding people into distant parks?

HUD's summary denial of this request sparked public meetings attended by hundreds. Interviews with flood victims by the national media sharply contradicted the aggressively cheerful press releases cranked out by HUD's public relations office. Complaining telephone calls went to the powerful Robert Byrd, who does not appreciate having his national prominence as Senate Majority Leader sullied by disgruntled constituents. Suddenly HUD reversed itself to permit what had been termed "out of the question" a week earlier. More important was the formation of a "Housing Task Force" with local, non-government residents as contributing members.

The totally devastated community of Lobata has learned firsthand the whimsical operations of a federal bureaucracy. "The problem was," explained the Rev. J. W. Hatfield, a twenty-year resident of Lobata, "that they promised they would put the mobile homes on our property. They made us sign a release to have our homes destroyed. The HUD man showed us where the trailer would go. Then they said they had changed their policy."

At a meeting of angry Lobata residents, HUD reversed its field again, now permitting the mobile homes on private land. The Feds did not surrender, however, without providing a punishing twist. Because Lobata was in a dangerous flood plain, Cain stated, people living there would not be eligible to buy their mobile homes. Nor would federal financing be available for rebuilding permanent housing. HUD's attempts some months hence to pull its mobile homes out of Lobata may spark the fiercest feuding since the Hatfields and McCoys blazed it out over these hills years ago.

The recurring theme to state and federal promises is that southern West Virginia will not end up like Buffalo Creek, another well-known flood-ravaged region only 45 miles from Williamson. There, thousands of homes washed



Illustrated London News

Kentucky Flood Waters

away in 1972 following the collapse of a coal waste dam. Inevitably, the "temporary" housing became permanent, with "mobile home parks" enduring for years. One park managed by HUD for four years still exists. The state government finally despaired of finding other housing and, through still unclear political maneuvers, arranged for the occupants to buy mobile home lots. The sense of closeness, so much a part of mountain communities, is gone on Buffalo Creek, ripped apart by moving neighbors to distant and disparate locations and arousing the bitterness which results from too many unfulfilled promises.

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As happened on Buffalo Creek, the conviction grows in Mingo County that only confrontation will produce results. Interaction between agency and victim develops an increasingly strident pitch. Finally, there is no dialogue, only an adversary process. That this process is already well along was demonstrated several weeks ago when Mingo County residents closed most businesses and pulled out 20,000 coal miners in a one-day work stoppage. Despite this protest against federal inattention and inefficiency, the White House gamely continued to state its conviction that all federal operations were proceeding smoothly.

Not so smoothly, however, that a detailed *Washington Post* article outlining HUD's bumbling (thirty days after the flood, only forty of 1,400 homeless families had been housed) could not spur the HUD Secretary and Chip Carter suddenly to appear one morning in Williamson for a tour to "boost HUD morale." The defensive Harris predictably expressed her satisfaction with relief operations. Nevertheless, word of the imminent and unexpected visit did jar local HUD workers to rush installation of emergency camper trailers, sparing the President's son from tripping over persons still sleeping outside.

Sadly, it seems in Mingo County that the only way to be rescued is to browbeat your rescuer. That was the message one despondent HUD field worker gave to a Friday night meeting of 100 Williamson citizens. "Do what you can do," he told the group. "You've done a lot. You did get the Secretary down here. They're just not moving fast enough. Just keep it up." (He was transferred from the area by Sunday.)

Perhaps one flood victim's observation about her HUD housing also describes the present federal disaster relief effort in southern West Virginia. HUD delivered a mobile home to Myra Holley, but delayed weeks before making water and sewer connections. "We don't understand it," she said, "even if they give these people a home, what good is it if you can't use it?" □

LETTERS (*Continued from page 2*)

sion of the National Bureau of Standards, did review these documents on May 2 and, basing his observations on that one rather quick review, he agreed with the obvious conclusions (*1*) that the original data show unacceptable temperature increases of 325 degrees in less than half an hour and reignition of the cables hours later; (*2*) that the final report to San Francisco omits information that is not normally omitted, and (*3*) that any and all unfavorable data are included in that missing information. . . .

To answer Mr. Turner's four points:

(*1*) Bendersky did state there was no fire penetration during the first forty-five minutes of the fire test, but he made it clear with graphs that the cable hole, in failing to resist a 325-degree temperature increase, had failed mandatory standards. He also demonstrated there was flame penetration hours later. Moreover, information not available to Bendersky in August 1974 indicates fire penetration even in the first forty-five minutes.

(*2*) It is odd that Bell Labs refers to later testing to support its compliance with fire codes, when it was the 1973 and 1974 tests it used (and fictionalized) to back up cable hole safety in its report to San Francisco.

(*3*) Bell Labs has the evidence that smoke from burning PVC cable coatings is highly combustible.

(*4*) Bell Labs did falsify the report written for presentation to the San Francisco building inspection superintendent. Bendersky strongly disagreed with contents of that report and, as many at Bell Labs and AT&T know, he refused to sign it because he disagreed with it.

The fact is the Bell System's 100-year fire safety record does not speak for itself. . . . The Bell Labs tests in 1973 and 1974 proved the safety questions were valid ones. The New York Telephone fire in 1975 proved it again. How long can AT&T pretend not to hear what recent history has told it of the fire risks that go with its equipment, cables, and cable holes? . . . *Frank Warner*

open season on editors

Oakland, Calif.

It's a pleasure to renew my subscription. Your renewal reminder was quite right—there *is* no other magazine like yours. The recent articles on regulatory agencies in New Jersey, and the federal health and safety bureau were like bright lights shining in the darkness of our Platonic cave.

I have only one small stylistic complaint. In the May 28th issue five editorial items in a row concluded with phrases of heavy moral condemnation: "A man can take a *bad fall* down one of those slopes," "given the *'rogue'* nature of the CIA," "the *folly* of misused technology," "its current *sinister* reputation," and "one can have *only contempt*."

This particular rhetoric, which begins in a tone of apparent detachment and judicious inquiry but ends in strongly insinuated blame, is effective but quickly becomes tiresome. In the issue of the 28th, it was used so repetitively it began to sound like righteous condescension, and had a kind of impotent feeling about it.

The opposite of this polite, ironic, mode of attack might be exemplified in Jack Anderson's daily columns, where he wades right in, swinging from the opening sentence. It has a tonic effect, which one is grateful for when staring into the murky worlds of corporate and governmental chicanery. . . .

A sense of moral superiority can act as a balm for repeated frustrations. But basically I think our opponents don't appreciate irony, and I myself wish you would not always be so polite. *Rober W. Wrubel*

Louisville, Ky.

The editorial, "A Konstitution" [*The Nation*, June 18], bothers me. First, you are taking at face value the reports of the "More than a million . . ." killed in the Soviet Union's "blood bath." It seems to me these figures came from very anti-Soviet sources and are open to question. Isn't this like taking the word of the Cambodian refugees on the reported "slaughter" there, which reports are stoutly denied by creditable, on-the-scene witnesses?

Under our Constitution, armies were sent into Russia in 1919 and the early 1920s in an attempt to overthrow the Soviet Government. As happened more recently with Chile, our government was involved in many schemes against the Soviet Union. The climate thus produced, it seems to me, must have contributed to the trials and executions of enemies, real and imagined.

Our own faults are too glaring to attack someone else's "Konstitution." Under the "Constitution," our government slaughtered, starved and exterminated countless thousands of Native Americans—and still does. Under the Amended Constitution, our government withdrew its protection from the South and permitted the killing of untold numbers of blacks after Reconstruction. *Duane Hardy*

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Understanding China: The Long March

CHINESE SHADOWS. *By Simon Leys. The Viking Press. Pagination and price not set.*

COMRADE CHIANG CH'ING. *By Roxane Witke. Little, Brown and Co. 549 pp. $15.*

THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY IN POWER, 1949-1976. *By Jacques Guillermaz. Westview Press. 614 pp. $24.75.*

CHINA'S ECONOMY AND THE MAOIST STRATEGY. *By John G. Gurley. Monthly Review Press. 325 pp. $15.*

CHINA'S INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION: 1949 to the Present. *By Stephen Andors. Pantheon Books. 344 pp. $15.95. Paper $6.95.*

NANCY DALL MILTON and DAVID MILTON

The centuries old Western attempts to understand China continue unabated, but in the realm of popular travelers' tales, two currents alternate with rhythmic regularity. One is the euphoric interpretation which has produced such whimsies of chinoiserie as England's blue willow china, sedan chairs at Versailles, and Shirley MacLaine's testimony that having understood the thought of Maoist China, she was ready to perform in Las Vegas. Since Nixon changed American foreign policy on China, Americans have enjoyed the resumption of our long-absent China romance. But the other side of the Western idealization of China has always been bitter disappointment that the Chinese do not turn out to be as we had thought and indeed intended them to be.

There are many indicators of the reversing of the current, but none more telling than the prominence the press has given to Simon Leys's *Chinese Shadows*. In his opening pages, Mr. Leys states that he knows nothing of Chinese politics, that he learned nothing on his trips to China, and expects to be criticized for a lack of information, the skimpiness and disjointedness of his book. It is precisely because of these inadequacies, however, he tells us, that he felt impelled to take on the thankless job of writing it. In a way that can only be described as embarrassing, Mr. Leys presents himself as spokesman for and protector of the Chinese people and the culture of "the country I love more than my own." Unfortunately, he had been to this beloved country only once, in 1955, and in 1970, writing an apparently hostile book, *Chairman Mao's New Clothes*, from his China watcher's desk in Hong Kong, he used the pseudonym, Simon Leys, so that he would be able to arrange travel to China under his real name, Pierre Ryckmans. Stating that "under the conditions in which foreign residents and visitors now live in the People's Republic of China, it is impossible to write anything but frivolities . . .," he proceeds to do just that, all the while huffing mightily under his white man's burden of giving the Chinese people the China he thinks they should have. The frivolities he describes include the ritual activities now familiar to all China readers of the 1970s—state banquets, statistical briefings by the hundreds and the returning to the visitor of discarded socks, pens or razor blades from vacated hotel rooms. Although Mr. Leys's frustrations and criticisms are expressed with particular venom, they are hardly original, and some travelers, taken on the same junket, have managed to get more perceptive books out of it. Orville Schell's *In the People's Republic* (reviewed in *The Nation* of May 14) is a current example. The complaints of Westerners about their "special treatment" by the Chinese is not even a phenomenon limited to the post-1949 period. Mr. Leys/Ryckmans, as a scholar of an earlier China, must be familiar with such accounts from the 17th century on. Perhaps a few more centuries of outraged denunciations will change China's treatment of foreign visitors; perhaps not. Meanwhile reviving the cult of inscrutability is of no use in understanding China.

Over the centuries, among all the Simon Leyses furiously pounding at the invisible but impenetrable barriers placed between Chinese life and the curious foreign visitor, there have been a few Roxane Witkes, couriers of selected information from the inner court to the outside world. Her book *Comrade Chiang Ch'ing*, is the product of her appointment to this task. When Witke was invited to China in the summer of 1972 to write on revolutionary women leaders, her welcome as an American was part of the dramatic foreign policy shift which the Nixon visit a few months earlier had opened and which itself had been so central a part of the succession struggle in which Lin Piao had been overthrown in the fall of 1971. Chiang Ch'ing's urgency in wishing to present her political record to the world was related to that struggle, for at that critical moment she and Chou En-lai stood as the symbols of the two great remaining political factions. Nearly all of Chiang Ch'ing's Cultural Revolution allies had been overthrown. Chou, who had been the central target of their attack, was in the ascendancy, and Mao's death was clearly imminent. It is doubtful that there was anyone in China who was not sharply aware of these facts; yet there is not a whisper of them in Witke's *Comrade Chiang Ch'ing*.

It was made very clear to Witke in her first meeting with Chiang Ch'ing that she was to be Chiang Ch'ing's Edgar Snow. However, the Peking of 1972 was not the Yenan of 1937, Chiang Ch'ing was not Mao Tse-tung, and in the more tawdry realities of contemporary image making Roxane Witke becomes not Chiang Ch'ing's Edgar Snow but her David Frost. Similarly, had a young Chinese professor, conversant with earlier periods of American history, but ignorant of Watergate, been offered the hospitality of San Clemente while recording Nixon's story, we might have had a Chinese *Citizen Richard Nixon*. Witke is not unaware of the pitfalls of her position, but states that a feeling of loyalty and sympathy for Chiang Ch'ing impelled her to write what the speaker wanted written. That would have been fair enough, but Witke, as historian, shores up this highly subjective account with unsubstantiated background explanation, and it will be a rare reader who completes her book without believing what has been read is history.

Chiang Ch'ing's story is a strange one,

Nancy Dall Milton and David Milton taught at the Peking First Foreign Languages Institute from 1964 to 1969, are the co-authors of The Wind Will Not Subside: Years in Revolutionary China (*Pantheon*), *and are co-editors with Franz Schurmann of* People's China, Vol. IV China Reader (*Random House*).

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filled with experiences of being rejected and looked down upon. There are numerous possibilities for speculation in this thirty-year psychohistory. Perhaps it is just as simple as Chiang Ch'ing indicates and Witke affirms, that Chiang Ch'ing suffered in the first part of her life from being a person of no importance, and in the second part, from being one of too much importance. However, there is a public record covering the last decade during which Chiang became at last the public figure she had yearned to be. Witke's explanation for Chiang Ch'ing's emergence into the public view is an astonishing one. "Not until the fourth decade, when Mao's vitality waned and left him more a symbol than an active leader, did she stride to the fore." This decade, of course, was the period of Mao's last monumental and controversial contribution to the Chinese Revolution, the Cultural Revolution. It can be unequivocally stated that Chiang Ch'ing's authority as a member of the all-powerful Cultural Revolution Group and as a revolutionizer of the arts derived entirely from her acceptance as Mao's representative. She rose to power in a traditional Chinese female role and fell in the same way. Witke's feminist interpretation may be congenial to Americans, but it has little to do with the facts as Chinese understood them.

The problem which emerged as Chiang Ch'ing's political positions became more closely entwined with the violence and anarchism of the "ultra-Left" was whether she spoke for herself or for Mao. However, in the late summer of 1967, when two great armies of Peking students confronted each other over what had become a life-or-death issue—the overthrow or defense of Premier Chou En-lai, Mao intervened for Chou. Wang Li, and his group, all close allies and protégés of Chiang Ch'ing, were arrested and the "ultra-Left" was smashed. Chiang Ch'ing dissociated herself from her former friends, but there were few Chinese who did not understand that her protection, as her power, came from her position as Mao's wife, and that thousands had paid a heavy price for policies from which she now affected aloofness.

By the summer of 1972, the students of the 1960s were scattered about the countryside, new alliances had been formed, but many of the issues of five years earlier were still alive. Chiang Ch'ing had formidable control over the arts which now consisted of virtually nothing except the "eight models" of a decade ago. The Cultural Revolution's breath of fresh air had become almost total strangulation, and the vengefulness and narrow dogmatism which had made many uneasy during Chiang Ch'ing's cultural revolutionary period now clearly indicated the profile of the future empress. It was against this setting that Chiang Ch'ing gave Roxane Witke her week-long interview.

One of the great popular issues of the Cultural Revolution had been the demand that the leaders maintain an egalitarian life style. Leaders on the Left, like Chiang Ch'ing, stated that not only they, but all the people must strip their lives down to the revolutionary minimum. As a result millions of Chinese, enthusiastically or reluctantly, got rid of their goldfish and their potted chrysanthemums, and resigned themselves to seeing the same revolutionary movies over and over again. It is against this background, which Witke omits, that the rage directed against the now fallen Chiang Ch'ing must be understood. Her own account is an exposé, far more devastating than anything a political enemy might devise, of Robespierre unmasked. As Witke describes the orchid park, the silk dresses, the corps of doctors and bodyguards, the billiard tables and private collection of Garbo films, it is Chiang Ch'ing's almost ingenuous assumption of privilege which is most shocking. For she was not just any empress, but one whose claim to power after Mao's death lay entirely in her pretensions to being the embodiment of revolutionary virtue.

In her impassioned analysis of *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, Chiang Ch'ing recited ". . . with an emotional intensity that implied personal meaning . . ." a passage that was clearly her view of herself:

Seldom the moon shines in a cloudless sky,
And days of brightness all too soon pass by,
A noble and aspiring mind
In a base-born frame confined,
Your charm and wit did only hatred gain,
And in the end you were by slanderers slain,
Your gentle lord's solicitude in vain.

It is a poignant statement.

After the overthrow of the "Gang of Four," the people of Tachai made a statement, ". . . under guidance from the top," Witke as historian adds. True, no doubt, but it also happens to be the kind of statement that had been circulating in China for several years: "This bunch of scoundrels . . . put idealism in vogue, causing people to be always in the wrong, no matter what work they did and how they worked. They made you suffer in one way or another because it was all wrong to do something or not to do anything, so that nothing could be achieved. . . ." It is also a poignant statement.

The Western world, of course, does not rely only on the intuitive interpretations of Western travelers and the occasional foreign court reporter for analysis of Communist China. The bulk of writing on China consists of the more prosaic research of scholars who labor under the banner of social science.

Jacques Guillermaz, described by his publishers as a statesman, teacher and soldier, is hailed by the French press for having produced a "flawlessly documented" history titled *The Chinese Communist Party in Power, 1949-1976*. On closer inspection, what one had hoped to be a major piece of scholarship turns out as a mere reworking of standard Western, mostly American, research on modern China. Facts are fitted into an old and rather stale framework. Following an established formula, Guillermaz sees early Chinese Communist achievements in creating a "centralized, well-ordered and balanced country with a realistic attitude" squandered during the period after 1956 when "China rushed headlong of its own freewill into the unknown (The Great Leap), which resulted firstly in economic chaos and then, from 1966 on in unparalleled political confusion (The Cultural Revolution)." The book is laced with maps and charts to document a questionable theory on how a great power was forged out of one monumental failure after another. For some reason, the author does not make use of the mine of rich materials and informal speeches of Mao and other leaders produced by the Cultural Revolution and now available in Western libraries. Even as a reference work, this book teeters on the edge of obsolescence.

Guillermaz announces at one point in his no-nonsense long march through twenty-five years of Chinese Communist rule that he has discovered the principal contradiction of the Chinese Revolution. Describing the historic Land Reform Act of June 28, 1950, he argues that the peasants "regarded the land reform as an end in itself; the Communists considered it as a beginning. The principal difficulties of the regime were to arise from this misunderstanding." By confusing the laws of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 with the Communist-led Chinese peasant revolutionary war, Guillermaz is unable to account for the fact that somehow this "misunderstanding" between leaders and led was transformed into the most profound struc-

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tural innovation produced by the Chinese Revolution—the establishment of a nationwide agricultural commune system by 600 million peasants. In the end, however, Guillermaz abandons his grudging objectivity and despairs of understanding all the strange things currently taking place in the People's Republic. His preference is for the old China, not the new; a quarter-century involving one of the great revolutions of world history has turned out to be a mess. The bewildered reader is warned on the last page of the book that "it would indeed be a tragedy if the only civilization to survive the ages were to founder before its eyes." The intuitive Simon Leys and the objective historian have mysteriously arrived at the same conclusions.

It has taken an established American economist to make clear for the Western reader just what the Chinese model of development is all about. John Gurley, a former managing editor of the *American Economic Review* and at present professor of economics at Stanford University, achieves in eight short essays what Guillermaz is unable to do in 600 pages. Brought together under the title of *China's Economy and the Maoist Strategy*, Gurley's essays clearly, concisely and brilliantly extract the essence of the Chinese alternate route to the modern world. In order to determine whether the Maoist model of development is succeeding or failing, whether it has been abandoned or implemented, one must know what that model is. Guillermaz either doesn't know or refuses to tell us. Gurley is able, as few other writers are, to summarize Maoist economic concepts.

The pleasure in reading these essays lies not only in the insight gained from the much needed comparison between capitalist and Maoist economic processes but also in the honesty of the author who admits that neither model is "always superior, either in ends or means." Gurley writes in the tradition of maverick political economists like Karl Polanyi who had the temerity to assert that undirected change should not take priority over the welfare of the community. Gurley recognizes in Mao the first great political leader of this century to reject the crude utilitarianism of English, American and Russian thought devoted to the virtues of untrammeled economic growth. Both Gurley and Mao measure development plans by their social as well as their economic costs.

Gurley's comparisons between the Russian and Chinese Revolutions are properly placed in their historical and cultural perspectives. He argues that, in many respects, the Chinese were in a superior position for building socialism while the Russian attempt was warped by an environment of deprivation forced upon them by history. On the other hand, Gurley spells out what Peking now wishes to forget—the enormous contribution made by the Russians in helping to create the new China. Crucial aid was given the Chinese Communists by their Soviet comrades who helped China to build an industrial, technical and planning establishment under the protective umbrella of Russian military might. As Gurley puts it, "no other country has ever received so much help toward full-scale industrialization as China did during the 1950s."

A close reading of these essays reveals that the real victory of the Maoist model of development was in the countryside where, despite setbacks of the "Great Leap Forward," Mao was successful in laying the foundations of the commune structure as the basic rural institution for the nation. China thus became the first nation in history to develop in a balanced way, so that the terms of trade between city and country favored the rural areas. If Mao, during his lifetime, was able to complete the greatest agrarian revolution in history, the question remains whether he was able to adapt this model to the cities. The Cultural Revolution of the 1960s was Mao's attempt to capture the superstructure and administrative centers of urban China. A great deal of recent evidence suggests that Mao was less than successful in his last great battle. China now appears to be divided into a Soviet influenced industrial-administrative complex and a countryside shaped by the Maoist strategy. This geographic and ideological division may shape the politics and social order of China for decades to come.

After defining the Chinese economic model as "something in between the Stalinist-Soviet and Maoist versions of development," Gurley concludes, after careful consideration of all the complex factors involved, that the Chinese model of development is probably not suitable for other developing countries. Wisely recognizing that China's economic model is not only Marxist-Socialist "but Chinese as well," he sees the cultural barriers standing in the way of those who would wish to replicate the Chinese experience. Revolution, Gurley concludes, is more important for oppressed peoples than blueprints of development. Mao, no doubt, would agree.

Somewhat depressed by the failure of Western economists to deal with China on its own terms, Professor Gurley calls upon the younger generation of American scholars to break away from the "stultifying atmosphere of present day

THAT

single pear in its ripeness
this morning swollen-ripe
its texture rough, rouged

more demanding upon the eye than the tree
branching about it
more demanding than the ornate drooping limbs
of a hundred perfect trees

yet flawed: marked as with a fingernail
a bird's jabbing beak
the bruise of rot
benign as a birthmark
a family blemish

still, its solitary stubborn weight is a bugle
a summoning of brass
the pride of it subdues the orchard
more astonishing than the acres of trees
the army of ladders
the workers' stray shouts

that first pear's weight
exceeds the season's tonnage
costly beyond estimation
a prize, a riddle
a feast

Joyce Carol Oates

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'neo-classical' economics and . . . refashion the discipline into political economy."

Stephen Andors represents that younger generation of American scholars. *China's Industrial Revolution: 1949 to the Present* is a detailed study of Chinese industrial patterns since the revolution. It describes the Maoist assault on Western and Soviet bureaucratic, elitist and technocratic forms adapted to the Chinese industrial structure. Here is a sincere effort, reinforced by careful and imaginative research, to flesh out the content of real Chinese policy disputes over management models and worker control of industry. Andors succeeds admirably in telling us what kind of industrial model Mao and his followers wished to create in China's mines, mills, and factories. Unfortunately, the book does not live up to its title in telling us what industrial model China has at the present. What Mao and his followers attempted is not the same as what they were able to institutionalize.

Andors pays a price for ignoring the struggles for power at the top levels of Chinese government. *China's Industrial Revolution* is thus strongest in outlining for us Maoist concepts of "planning" and "management" and weakest on the crucial Maoist theme—"politics." The author narrows his concept of politics to the area of programmatic formulations in dispute. This treatment is characteristic of the New Left generation of scholars who equate politics with ideology. The Great Helmsman, although a formidable ideologist, never made that error. Mao never forgot that, in the final analysis, the struggle over ideology would be decided by the struggle for power.

Andors also suffers from a common error found among Western scholars sympathetic to the continuing revolution led by Mao—overestimation of the strength of Left factions in China. One reason for this error is that most research on China, including that of Andors, relies heavily on the Chinese press. The Chinese press up until Mao's death was controlled by the Left, but only because Mao turned over the propaganda organs of the country to a handful of his followers and relatives. At Mao's death the Army and the resilient party organization which the Chairman had fought for over a decade reasserted control over the opinion-making apparatus, arrested Mao's lieutenants and relatives, and with little apparent opposition recaptured the Left stronghold in Shanghai. Key elements of the ideological foundation of the Maoist participatory management model vanished as if by magic. In October 1976, the *Liberation Army Daily*, in a major editorial, reinstated the old Leninist concepts of command which the new regime hoped to impose on the nation:

> The masses are divided into classes; classes are led by political parties; political parties, as a general rule, are directed by more or less stable groups composed of the most authoritative, influential and experienced members who are elected to the most responsible positions and are called leaders.

Much to the surprise of the readers of *China's Industrial Revolution*, and perhaps to the author himself, the influential, authoritative and experienced Chinese leaders of the 1970s are not the young workers and rebel spokesmen of the 1960s but the old party veterans and Army men, many of whom are approaching three score and ten. What then remains of the Maoist model of industrial democracy? No one knows. Certainly, thousands of Chinese workers educated by Mao will resist new attempts to reimpose Soviet-style controls and will strike their factories if driven too hard. However, it is the Army, minus its Left elements purged with Lin Piao, which today has taken control over China's rail networks that were once a radical base. Chang Ch'un-ch'iao and Wang Hung-wen, formerly spokesman for the urban Left, are in jail; they will no longer set industrial policy in Shanghai. The struggle to implement the Maoist model of participatory management will go on. But the institutionalization of that model, perhaps even its survival, will depend upon the control of political power by the rank and file toiling in the expanding industrial arena.

Western travelers and scholars will persist in the attempt to grasp Chinese reality. One of the difficulties of this task may lie in the fact that the Chinese are involved in a long historical process of coming to terms with themselves. □

A Difficult Angle

PORTRAITS OF CHINESE WOMEN IN REVOLUTION. *By Agnes Smedley. Edited with an introduction by Jan and Steve MacKinnon. Afterword by Florence Howe. The Feminist Press. 208 pp. Paper $3.95.*

JOYCE MILTON

From 1929 to 1940 Agnes Smedley's reports from China, appearing in *The Nation*, *The New Republic*, the *Manchester Guardian* and elsewhere, cut through the fuzzy, romanticized image of Kuomintang democracy which prevailed in the Western, and especially in the American, press. As early as 1930, Smedley began journeying, often on foot, into remote areas of rural China and predicting that the countryside was ripe for agrarian revolution. She was a bitter and persistent critic of the Nationalists' use of political terror against students and intellectuals. When Chiang Kai-shek was taken prisoner by the forces of the Young Marshal in Sian, Smedley was on hand to interview the mutineers and broadcast their demands for a united front against Japan. In 1937 she became one of the first Western correspondents to reach the new Communist headquarters in Yenan and, after the Japanese invasion of northern China, she was again among the first to witness the guerrilla operations and partisan organizing of the Communist-led Eighth Route Army.

Perhaps no other American in China knew the country as intimately as Agnes Smedley did. Her large circle of friends included the revered patrician writer Lu Hsun, the then U.S. military attaché Col. Joseph Stilwell, and Mao Tse-tung himself, whom she once attempted, unsuccessfully, to teach English through such American folk songs as *Red River Valley*. In 1943 Smedley's best and most expansive book, *Battle Hymn of China*, was published to general acclaim, and she saw her views on the impotence of Chiang Kai-shek's regime and the ultimate victory of the Communists gain favor with American policy makers of the day.

Yet by the time of her death seven years later, the pendulum had swung again, and Smedley's enthusiasm for the Red Chinese cause had made her a pariah. She was hounded by the FBI and accused, on the basis of tainted evidence from Japanese war documents, of being a Red agent. Her books were removed from libraries and were allowed to go out of print. She was remembered, if at all, as a shrill propagandist or a sentimental fellow traveler. Ironically, the fact that she had never

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Joyce Milton, formerly an editor at Kirkus Reviews, *is at present a free-lance writer at work on a book about women correspondents.*

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POND

The soft forgiving ooze of the pond's bottom,
that cool fluid move through the toes
when you step out just beyond roots,
through weeds, into that black goo

that the dream has warned is love's terror:
to stand in this abiding surface among shells
maybe of ancestors, maybe of enemies,
is to feel the flesh in the world

and to think of the last time you were in love,
the vertigo and skidding pale sky,
the lily's perfect, gentle moves,
that slippery beauty, that quick eternity.

Dave Smith

been a member of the Communist Party, and was regarded by it as a dangerous maverick for her denunciations of the Hitler-Stalin pact, contributed to her obscurity. Even Communist newspapers declined to publish obituaries or to defend her reputation.

Smedley's name remained virtually forgotten until 1973 when her autobiographical novel, *Daughter of Earth*, was reissued by the Feminist Press and quickly became an underground favorite. That the feminist movement, rather than the thaw in American attitudes toward Red China, should be the immediate occasion for renewed interest in Smedley's career is surprising, but not inappropriate. The conflict between feminism and commitment to left-wing political causes was a theme that ran through Smedley's whole life: she grew up desperately poor in the mining camps of Colorado and had difficulty deciding who was most to blame for her childhood sufferings—her alcoholic, irresponsible father or the bosses who had exploited him. As a young woman she was active in the Indian nationalist movement and became the common-law wife of the leading revolutionary, Virendranath Chattopadhaya—only to find herself expected to mend his clothes, echo his political opinions, and otherwise behave like a docile housewife.

Even in China her interest in women's questions involved her in painful situations. It seems that while she was in Yenan there was a dispute over whether Communist leaders should divorce the women they had wed before the Long March. Smedley, who by this time had come to regard marriage as a "relic of feudalism," took sides with those who called for the divorces, thus earning the enmity of Madame Mao, who went so far as to threaten to kill her. Smedley's tendency to jump headlong into other people's controversies generated that kind of antagonism, but even at her most abrasive, she never seems to have been mean-spirited. Her passionate temperament and powerful, if blunt, intellect made her a freakish but rather grand outsider.

In her writing as well as in her life Smedley constantly struggled to integrate her feminist outlook with her broader interest in the Chinese Revolution. The separate publication here of her writings about women provides a useful focus, but it is not a division she would have been likely to make herself. Smedley resisted the tendency to isolate women's concerns. Indeed, her inclusion of women and their accomplishments on a rough parity with men in her everyday reporting is perhaps the most significant feminist statement she ever made.

Jan and Steve MacKinnon, who also contribute a meticulous and much needed biographical introduction to Smedley, have collected these journalistic sketches from magazine articles and books written over the entire period of her career in China. The "portraits" range from Madame Chiang Kai-shek to workers in Canton silk factories and the wives of coal miners. They are young students and activists, full of energy and optimism generated by their recent liberation from the traditional roles of obedient daughter and wife. They are matrons courageously taking advantage of the changing times to win some education for a favorite daughter or to prevent their husbands from taking a new concubine. And, most poignantly, they are the casualties: educated girls who sink into virtual imprisonment behind the walls of their family home because they lack the nerve to resist; and their opposite numbers, wives brought up to be gracefully subservient who suddenly find that they are not "modern" enough to please their Western-educated husbands.

Smedley was not primarily a facts-and-figures journalist. Her instincts were those of a storyteller and a moralist, but at the same time she resisted the bland mechanisms of Socialist realism. Character, not ideology, was her touchstone, and many of these vignettes have a folk-tale quality, with heroines stepping forth to tell their own stories in the first person.

Among the most striking figures to emerge on Smedley's proletarian stage is Mother Tsai, an elderly peasant woman who first hears the message of women's equality late in life. Mother Tsai is so dedicated to spreading the good word that she lectures baffled Japanese prisoners on the benefits of women's liberation while presenting them with embroidered pillows. Eventually her zeal lands her in the hospital, bruised but triumphant after leading the Women's Association in a raid on the local opium den and mah-jongg parlor. Smedley's portrait of Mother Tsai has dimensions beyond mere reportage: she manages to project both the humorous side of the old woman's earthy enthusiasm and a profound respect for her strength and intelligence.

A more brittle portrait is "The Martyr's Widow," which reads like fiction although it is based on an actual incident. Here a young wife, who opposes her husband's involvement in Kuomintang politics, complains so indiscreetly that he is arrested by the local warlord. The husband's father and friends come forward with bribe money to buy his freedom, but the wife, finding herself cast as negotiator, is carried away by the romantic possibilities of her role. She haggles over the price, orders new dresses to enhance her image as a wronged beauty, and otherwise delays until the authorities run out of patience and the husband is executed. The young woman, now totally corrupted by her narcissism, proceeds to play on public sympathy for her widowhood to gain power, money, and even another woman's husband.

In stories like this one, Smedley's fascination with a compelling character overtakes her desire to make either a feminist or pro-revolutionary point. Elsewhere, one is struck by her ability to have it both ways. Although she may personally have taken a rather dogmatic anti-marriage stand, for example, she was not without sympathy for the tragedy of wives in a fluid society, as is illustrated by her memoir of Hsu Mei-ling: As a young girl, we are told, Hsu

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Mei-ling endured the excruciating process of foot binding only to undergo the equally excruciating experience of having her feet unbound when the fashion was repudiated. When Smedley meets her, Hsu Mei-ling has adopted short Western dresses in a desperate attempt to please her Americanized husband, and her bandaged, half-crippled ankles are visible as they never would have been in the old-fashioned gowns she herself prefers. Without ever drawing an explicit connection, Smedley makes this unhappy wife's deformed feet a metaphor for the psychic scars of all women who live through cultural change without really being liberated by it. The Hsu Mei-lings of this world, Smedley implies, are doomed by their economic and emotional dependence on men; as long as that continues they are only exchanging an old set of rules with some built-in protections for a new one that is rigged against them.

Smedley's ability to focus on this dilemma, without ever using it to make excuses for herself or for others, is at the heart of her complex and vital feminism. Those who are lucky enough to have read *Battle Hymn of China*, still out of print, will nevertheless recognize that the MacKinnons' collection captures only a small part of Smedley's accomplishment. She was a writer who needed a large canvas, who strove for big, bold effects, and these short excerpts and articles don't always show her style to best advantage. Yet her observations, of human nature in general and the Chinese Revolution in particular, retain their bite. Along with *Daughter of Earth*, *Portraits* remains the only readily available introduction to the work of this most remarkable woman. □

The Marginal View

MAHATMA GANDHI AND HIS APOSTLES. *By Ved Mehta. The Viking Press. 260 pp. $14.95.*

INDIA: A Wounded Civilization. *By V.S. Naipaul. Alfred A. Knopf. 191 pp. $7.95.*

LEONARD A. GORDON

The recently ended twenty-one-month Emergency in India has, *inter alia*, had the effect of raising some fundamental questions about the nature and direction of Indian civilization. The questions go beyond the political parameters of the Emergency: Can there be serious change within India's caste-based social system? Are Western-style political and economic institutions unworkable and inappropriate in India? Are the life and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi relevant to India's present dilemmas? What would an indigenous socialism look like and how might it be brought about? Can Indian culture incorporate Western elements and still remain creative and relevant to both ordinary and sophisticated Indians?

These are the sorts of questions Naipaul and Mehta generally raise in their work even though they provide few answers. The authors are marginal men, shaped by Indian and Western cultures, and in the case of Naipaul, by Caribbean culture as well. But neither resides in India and they are, as Naipaul describes an Indian merchant who lives outside India, ". . . secure in someone else's economy and political system." Naipaul grew up in Trinidad and has visited India as an adult. Mehta was raised in the Punjab, but since the age of 15 has lived in the United States and Great Britain, returning to India from time to time.

They both went to India for their investigations but, unlike Western travelers, Naipaul and Mehta carry within themselves the conflicts and dilemmas of India. Unlike Indians permanently residing in their homeland, the two authors do not have to confront India day by day. By choice they reside in the West; they are writers and cosmopolitans. They are city men assessing a predominantly rural country with the dual perspective of outsider and insider.

Directly and obliquely their writings express their wrestlings with their own identities and with the unfolding or collapsing civilization of India. For Naipaul, here, as in his account of his first extended visit to India (*An Area of Darkness*, 1964), the connection is explicit:

> In India I know I am a stranger; but increasingly I understand that my Indian memories, the memories of that India which lived on into my childhood in Trinidad, are like trapdoors into a bottomless past.

In the West Indies, the Indian is "a late intruder," a member of a rootless, doomed minority which will disappear. So, if such an Indian seeks roots, his quest must lead to India. To his latest confrontation with India, Naipaul brings the skills of one of the most accomplished novelists of our time. In addition he displays the best virtues of a literary critic, using the novels of R.K. Narayan and U.R. Anantamurti and the plays of Vijay Tendulkar as pathways into the present condition of India.

For Mehta, the present volume, unlike his autobiographical work, *Face to Face*, or his *Walking the Indian Streets* or *Portrait of India*, raises personal identity questions only indirectly. Having experienced the scenes of India's partition (movingly chronicled in *Face to Face*) and Gandhi's call for nonviolence at a time of communal war, Mehta has recently visited close disciples of Gandhi including some who are attempting to carry on the Mahatma's work a generation after his assassination. The first and third parts of this book consist almost entirely of quotations from interviews with these disciples. From these quotations a vivid picture of Gandhi is created, and that is about all one can say for this book. The middle part is a pedestrian summary of chapters from Gandhi's autobiography interlaced with a few quotations from standard biographies of Gandhi by B.R. Nanda and Louis Fischer, as well as from the more interpretive works of Erik H. Erikson and N.K. Bose.

Mehta mocks the gargantuan efforts of those who are now compiling Gandhi's collected writings and the work of his last secretary and official biographer, Pyarelal. These official memorialists do approach Gandhi with reverence, but they also perform the valuable function of preserving and editing material. They should not be lightly dismissed by so slight a scholar as Mehta, who seems not to have consulted even a fraction of the relevant documents. His disregard for historical sources other than a few interviews and secondary books leads to numerous errors about the history of the period from 1920 to 1947. Mehta does not know the objectives and organization of the Non-co-operation movement of 1921-22, the political role of Gandhi in the 1930s, nor the split in the Marxist camp during World War II. The reader in search of the historical Gandhi should first read his autobiography and then see the works of the aforementioned writers and those of Pyarelal, Joan Bondurant and Judith Brown.

The small contribution of this book is in the quotations from the disciples. From these the flesh-and-blood Gandhi, particularly the personal man, steps

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Leonard Gordon has spent three years in India and currently teaches at Brooklyn College. His book, Bengal: The Nationalist Movement, 1876-1940, *was awarded the Watumull Prize by the American Historical Association.*

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forth. We hear anew of Gandhi's experiments with food, sexual discipline and basic hygiene. The late C. Rajagopalachari, one of the most intelligent Gandhians and a leader in his own right, told Mehta that Gandhi was one of the hungriest and most highly sexed men he had known. This simple but accurate statement helps to untangle the Mahatma's rationalizations for his rigid dietary rules and his endless arrangements for sexual temptations to prove his purity.

Mehta has spent so much time with the private Gandhi, fascinated like his subject with food, sex and hygiene, that we learn almost nothing about the man's great appeal and political skills. Since Mehta is concerned with the impact and memory of Gandhi, he might have investigated the varied responses to the Mahatma among different groups and regions in Indian society. Though Gandhi was the greatest mass leader in Indian history, he was also opposed by many high-caste Hindus in Bengal, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. He was never accepted by most of India's Muslims as their leader, and Indian liberals (political moderates), Communists, and even important Untouchable leaders only acknowledged him begrudgingly and then not as their spokesman.

Mehta seems to believe that the Gandhian canon is potentially still important for India. He writes, praising certain of the disciples:

> Each Constructive Worker I meet seems to take refuge in his or her own way from the despairing task of coming to grips with Indian poverty without Gandhi. . . . But at least three Constructive Workers—Vinoba Bhave, Satish Chandra Das Gupta, and Abdul Ghaffar Khan—continue to do battle for Gandhi's ideas and ideals, undaunted by Gandhi's absence. These men are Gandhi's real heirs—mahatmas, or "great souls," in their own right.

Naipaul also gives a great deal of attention to Gandhi in his assessment of Indian civilization, but his view is much more critical, penetrating and controversial than Mehta's. Naipaul sees Gandhi as a typically self-absorbed Indian drawn out of his shell by the buffets of the outside world: South African racism and British authoritarianism. In India, Gandhi became a holy man transforming hitherto negative virtues of the Indian personality into weapons to confront the British. However, Gandhi's constructive program was another form of Indian archaism. And even his saintly appeal could not change a society essentially "cruel and horribly violent." Gandhi's ideal of a nation composed of self-sufficient villages represents to Naipaul a retreat into an illusory, romantic, barbaric world, a world without creative intellect and change.

Naipaul's analysis of Gandhi leads directly into his account of the Gandhian challengers of Indira Gandhi and her Emergency. He finds that ". . . the Gandhianism of a man like Mr. Desai was as exhibitionist and hollow as the Gandhianism of the men he opposed; it offered nothing." Vinoba Bhave, ". . . in the vanity of his spiritual perfection, is more than a decadent Gandhian. His religion is a kind of barbarism; it would return men to the bush," while Jaya Prakash Narayan, hero of the ending of the Emergency, ". . . offers as politics a version of an old religious exaltation; and it has made him part of the sterility he is protesting against."

Naipaul is often sweeping in his condemnations and in his belief that Indian civilization is dying, self-consumed. But the particulars of his account occasionally contradict the summary statements he makes. He describes the dehumanizing poverty of city and countryside in terrifying detail, but interspersed in this narrative are comments about a great stirring from below which is beginning to make itself felt throughout the society. He gives a firsthand sketch of the power of the Shiv Sena (a communalist party popular among the poor) in a Bombay shantytown and a much less accurate, second-hand report on the Naxalites (Maoist revolutionaries) in

THE VOICES YOU HEAR MIGHT BE YOUR OWN

When you ask me,
"What is the reason for day and night?"
I can't answer. Instead I think,

Maybe I'm not at home here, *or*
There's a scarf tightening around the night
that forces the sun out of its mouth.

At three in the morning you found me once,
crawling around the room on my knees,
feeling for the way out.

When night blots the page of my skin
I think, There's no time to waste
locked inside this body.

I think of the people I must see,
the cousin who killed himself as an accusation,
the great-aunt who insisted we would leave her

each night to die alone. Did they pass
through life like bitter seeds falling
into earth, growing out the other side?

If you find in the morning
that my open eyes won't see,
that my voice is not my own,

don't abandon me.
I am working my way back
through this landscape of familiar lives,

the grandfather who died when I was ten
asking me now: "What do you say
when a man disappears?" He tells me

that if I follow straight lines
I'll only shorten my life.
When the sun goes down again

and you hear voices in the room,
if they're not coming from my mouth,
open your own.

Julie Mishkin

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rural West Bengal.

These movements from below have negative and positive qualities, but they do offer their followers the possibility of community and change within a society long dominated by a thin stratum of the rich and powerful. What haunts Naipaul is that those rising from below embody the same violence and cruelty, the same lack of perception of their own society, and the same deficiencies of positive vision that shape those presently on top. So even if there is an eventual overturning, this will continue the slide into barbarism and self-destruction.

The older elite, still atop Indian power structures in country and city, are not yet ready to relinquish their place. Naipaul tells how they have adopted institutions from the West over the past two centuries which do not and cannot work in an Indian environment. He recounts the deficiencies of the Indian press, Indian misadaptations of Western law, academic disciplines, painting and technology. I find these dismissals of Indian efforts in all these categories much too comprehensive. Naipaul himself contradicts his total vision of mere mimicry at work by sensitive accounts of particular achievements. Doubtless many mistakes have been made, but India has managed vast technological progress and looks forward to more careful incorporations of Western material culture into Indian life. Literature and the arts are also much livelier than Naipaul would make them appear, particularly in Indian regional variations and languages. Modern Indian painting is not to be dismissed with a wave of the hand; and even the much maligned Indian cinema has produced one world-class director.

Naipaul's words tremble on the page. It is hard for any reader to resist the emotions they set off. It is difficult not to be swept up by generalizations that negate the entire culture. For example:

> It seems to be always there in India: magic, the past, the death of the intellect, spirituality annulling the civilization out of which it issues, India swallowing its own tail.

But I think it is important to remember that Naipaul's particulars offer some contradiction to these statements, that he has made an impressionistic sampling of Indian life from which many things are omitted, and that his view of India is part of a larger pessimistic vision of the human condition today.

Neither Naipaul nor Mehta offer much hope for India. Mehta is left with the few true heirs of Gandhi, while Naipaul gives up on traditional Indian culture as well as on India's experiments with Western imports. The recent election in India indicates that Indians are more politically aware than they have been given credit for. But whether there really is a great stirring from below that can transform Indian society into a more egalitarian, humane and modern society is still unknown. □

DANCE

NANCY GOLDNER

The likelihood of Mikhail Baryshnikov's dancing in a variety of Balanchine ballets is not great. Having no official guest artists on its roster, the New York City Ballet is not a feasible residence for a jet setter like Baryshnikov. And the two Balanchine works in American Ballet Theatre's repertory, *Apollo* and *Theme and Variations*, are currently dormant. Therefore, one must catch the world's greatest male dancer in the work of the world's greatest choreographer where one can, and in what one can. In June something called the First North American International Dance Festival happened in Chicago. Among the twenty-odd events spanning three evenings of festivity was Balanchine's *The Prodigal Son*, starring Baryshnikov in his American debut in the role. Although Balanchine has composed many, many starring roles for men, *The Prodigal Son* is one of the few whose intent remains intact when one writes that it stars a man. The Chicago production did full justice to the stature of both choreographer and dancer. Whether the dancer did full justice to the choreographer is a longer story.

In many ways Baryshnikov is a natural for the part. His physique, small but powerful, and his capacity for bathing fierce intensity in innocence are similar to the body and personality of Edward Villella, who was the greatest of the City Ballet's Prodigal Sons. The innocence conveyed by both artists grows out of their utter sincerity and generosity of spirit. Villella never had to spend his generosity prodigally, but Baryshnikov, a free-lancer, has sometimes had to squander his good faith on exploitative ballets. The special joy of the Baryshnikov-*Prodigal Son* meeting was that the dancer's devotion was repaid in kind. The ironic twist of the occasion was that Baryshnikov missed the innocence in the role. He was prodigal, but not quite a son and certainly not a Biblical son. The replete Prodigal Son is all three, and Balanchine lays out the composite carefully in the opening scene. The boy tears out of the family tent, hurls himself through the air in a symbolic gesture of vaulting the threshold (a gray picket fence stands in the corner of the stage), and beats his anxious thighs with his fists. A young man, he is brimming for experience. A son, he is brimming with revolt. The dutiful son of a patriarch, he beats his thighs in punishment as well as exuberance. When the father beckons him to the family circle and bows his head in respectful devotion, the Biblical son complies with the form. But there's no stopping the ordinary son in him. His body thrashes again, is quelled again, thrashes again—and he's off, out the gate and into the world. He is a bad son, but we wish him Godspeed.

Baryshnikov was out the gate from the second he ran on stage. He was contemptuous of his sisters, contemptuous of ceremony. His father had to push his head down into the bow. He beat his thighs in sheer fury. More an Osbornian angry young man than a wayward member of an important family, his subsequent misadventures naturally could not be tinged with the poignancy this ballet deserves. The prodigal deserved what he got, Baryshnikov made one feel. Although his limbs quivered with stunning virility on the long trek home, as though the very vitality that drove him away from the hearth could also take him back to it with equal conviction, one felt that his father's embrace was perhaps a bit premature.

Baryshnikov's miscalculations of interpretation, although they result in a simplification of character, are surface matters. The deeper issue he does not quite understand yet is that in Balanchine the source of movement stems from music rather than dramatic situation. This rule is actually an aesthetic, and it even holds for something as overtly dramatic as *The Prodigal Son*. The magnificence of the crawl home lies less in the fact that it is a crawl, or that it is a sustained crawl, or that it is the touchstone of the plot—than that it is commanded to happen by Prokofiev. The Prodigal Son inches his way into his father's arms not mile by mile but note by note. The pathos and grandeur of this episode derive from the way emotional experience is funneled through an external, rigorously formal medium. All of Balanchine's ballets sting us by their distillation of emotion into metrical units. *The Prodigal Son*'s sting ought to be double strength because the emotion is potentially histrionic and the choreography boldly literal. Crawling on all fours, the Prodigal Son nevertheless

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dances his way home with as much musical exactitude as a cavalier exhibits when he cabrioles across the stage. It is not untruthful to say that the father cradles his son just after the boy has fallen supine at his feet, but it's more truthful to say that the reconciliation coincides with the final eight bars of music. The Baryshnikov performance lacked measure, because he tried to embody real time rather than obey musical time. Still, if his performance was more tantalizing than gratifying, to have missed it would have been a torment indeed.

The siren was Ghislaine Thesmar. (The rest of the cast, including the important role of the father, was ungraciously herded anonymously under the name Chicago Ballet, for whose financial benefit this festival was engineered.) Thesmar, a guest from the Paris Opera Ballet, was excellent. She was lithe, cold, in command. Above playing the vamp, she was not afraid to expose the power in provocatively tilted hips or the touch of cruelty in taut limbs. She raped and robbed the novice with a chilling ease no less beautiful for its matter-of-factness.

It also happens that of all the so-called stars imported from Europe for the Chicago occasion Thesmar is the only one who can dance. (I am not counting the Royal Ballet's Merle Park and Wayne Eagling because, although they can certainly dance, the duet they performed from Kenneth MacMillan's *Romeo and Juliet* makes a secret of it.) Katalin Csarnoy and Ivan Marko bullied their way through the *Black Swan pas de deux*. Marko's inability to do a glissade, much less a double turn in the air, helps explain why he is now a star of the Bejart company. Patrick Dupond's epicene carriage and Max Bozzoni's vehicle for him—*Death of a Swan*, to a bit from Beethoven's *Sixth Symphony* (need one say more?)—makes one wonder why Dupond is *not* dancing *chez* Bejart and why Bozzini is not a resident choreographer for his company. Dupond, along with Elizabetta Terabust, are the current toasts of Europe. Terabust, in the *Don Quixote pas de deux* with Patrice Bart, balanced on one foot for what must have been close to sixty seconds. The longer she stayed up there, the more horrifying the situation became, and not only because her feet claw the floor. An incipient stunt act such as this duet makes the dividing line between feat and freak perilously thin. Patrice Bart, meanwhile, is physically grotesque—a cruel fact in what is, alas, a cruel business. He snapped his fingers a lot, but the noise could not dispel the vision of his sandbag buttocks. Noella Pontois and Hideo Fukagawa did a stolid *Grand Pas Classique*, and three Cubans entangled themselves in a fat slab of satire on entangled choreography, thought up by Alberto Mendez. Even Baryshnikov was not at his most resilient in the *Corsaire pas de deux*, with Terabust again. The program began with native ware—James Clouser's *Con Spirito*, danced by the Chicago Ballet. It is no secret that American ballet is in better shape than European ballet, but when an unknown such as Barbara Pontecorvo outclasses stars of European opera houses the situation is too pathetic for patriotic cheers. And too shocking for tears. The undue length of this gala eventually solved the dilemma, however. You end up numb with battle fatigue and, in this case, forever grateful for the fact that *The Prodigal Son*, which ended the program, contains not one single *fouetté*.

The weekend during which Baryshnikov danced *The Prodigal Son* was also the occasion of Gelsey Kirkland's debut in *Swan Lake*, with American Ballet Theatre. She is as much a natural for her debuting role as Baryshnikov is for his, yet she too was no more the perfect swan than he was the perfect son. However, I found her performance thoroughly enchanting despite troubles—arbitrarily tricky phrasing in the solos, mannered entrances, an overintellectualization of technique in a few instances. The girl is a swan, which is to say, she is a ballerina. When she swooned away from Ivan Nagy's arms, her back arching deeply at the precise moment her legs folded together, she had me swooning too. When Nagy slowly spiraled her down to earth from a high lift in attitude, the broken line of her leg like a gleaming crystal, I really believed she was the last flake of a swanstorm. The curving, fluttery paths of her Odette and Odile were guided by Tchaikovsky rather than by a consideration of character. Her phrasing for Odile was sharper and more idiosyncratic than for Odette—qualities that could, in a long shot, stand for metaphors of Odile's treacherous personality—but by and large Kirkland was more involved in the violin's soaring lyricism than in a deline-

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ation of the differences between a white and black nature. Seeing the sound of a violin is a rare pleasure indeed, but it does not necessarily produce the warmth one might expect. Kirkland took a literal approach to swanness. She was ahuman, rather like the wild creature Balanchine prefers his bird-ballerinas in *Swan Lake* and *The Firebird* to personify. This approach is not to everyone's liking, but I found it awesome and as believable as a fairy tale should be. □

INDIGENOUS MUSIC/ Nat Hentoff

A while ago, at O'Lunney's, a New York club specializing in country rather than Irish music (though there are some common instrumental roots), I heard an unusually beguiling group of young musicians who call themselves Asleep at the Wheel. Although abundantly ecumenical in style (a tangy fusion of rockabilly, jazz, modern country ballads and honky-tonk blues), Asleep at the Wheel clearly had been most influenced by the "Western swing" of Bob Wills and his Texas Playboys.

Wills, a Texas fiddler and dance band leader, was shaped in large part by black music. His devotion to Bessie Smith, for instance, once impelled him to ride 50 miles on horseback to hear her in person. Starting in the early 1930s, Wills traveled widely and incessantly with a band that did indeed bring swing to Western music and yet included enough authentic white folk elements to attract large, durable audiences of traditional country listeners. Wills's units were uncommonly high-spirited, with a lithe, smoothly jumping beat; almost everything they played was laced with amiably mocking humor (*Bob Wills Anthology*, Columbia KG 32416).

Among those carrying on the Wills tradition from time to time has been Merle Haggard (*A Tribute to the Best Damn Fiddle Player in the World, or My Salute to Bob Wills*, Capitol ST 638). But no young players were keeping "Western swing" alive until the advent of Asleep at the Wheel. An eleven-piece band based in Austin, Texas, it is composed of players and singers from various parts of the country and of diverse musical backgrounds. Like Wills, they have seasoned themselves by learning how to play dance music. (If you can make someone really want to move, you don't need a course in communications theory to know that you've connected.) Also like Wills, Asleep at the Wheel spends most of its time on the road (at least 250 nights a year). Its audiences range from the highly demanding habitués of Texas dance halls to Northern youngsters who hear enough rock in the goings-on to stay and find themselves drawn into country swing as well. Even some older jazz aficionados dig The Wheel, rightly hearing the band's affection for Count Basie.

On records, it has taken awhile for Asleep at the Wheel to come anywhere close to the authoritative warmth and wit of its "live" performances. Finally, however, its newest Capitol release, *The Wheel*, does capture some of the easeful zest of these children of Bob Wills who have, of course, gone beyond him in repertory and range of style because they are in the business of growing their own music rather than running a museum. That is, Wills's spirit is very much present, but they keep finding new ways to synthesize.

The male singers, Ray Benson and Leroy Preston, are easefully, idiomatically persuasive; but ever since that night at O'Lunney's, I have been particularly taken by Chris O'Connell, whose coolly sensual voice and incisive phrasing adds a dimension of laid-back tension to the proceedings. Unlike many other female country singers, she does not envelop an audience. She makes it come to her, but still always holds some part of herself in reserve.

Instrumentally, Asleep at the Wheel continually cooks, as jazzmen used to say; it has a crisp, flowing rhythm section with pungent fiddles and saxophones up front. While the band can play in just about any setting, the Wheel is most satisfying—to audiences and to itself—in unpretentious drinking places and at dance halls. They also enjoy the chance, as happened recently in Fort Worth, to play a concert alongside the Original Texas Playboys, a currently functioning group of Bob Wills's alumni.

Admittedly, the Playboys are a revivalist group, but as their Capitol album (*The Late Bob Wills' Original Texas Playboys*) indicates, the music is not in the least stale. Ranging from Wills's *The Convict and the Rose* to a luminous love song, *Lily Dale*, the performances sustain and indeed renew the Wills heritage of black-and-white time and common dreams and losses—all done with a grace and unabashed openness of spirit that remain quite rare in any area of popular music. □

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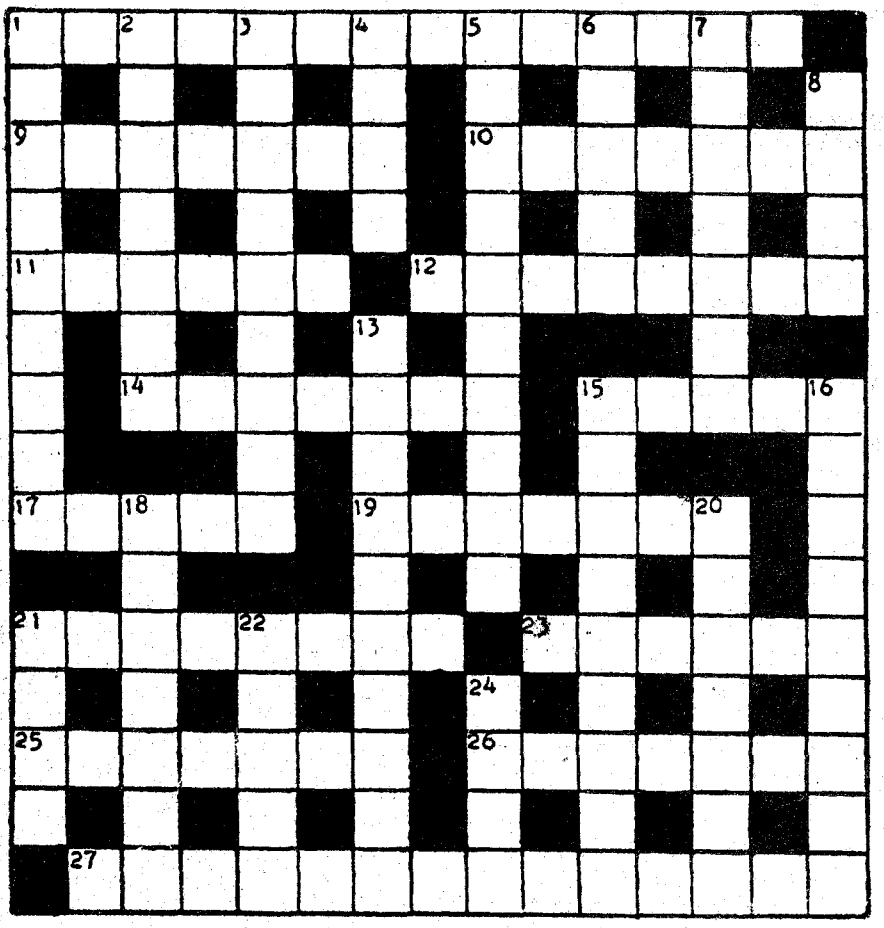

ACROSS

1 Not necessarily implying a junior case of male chauvinism—just natural sex preference. (4,4,2,4)
9 By implication, does the make-up formula say to these: "5 down"? (7)
10 Is such wood especially seasoned? (4,3)
11 Overcharged by the scoop? (6)
12 Such is no different from the things that make sitting easy. (8)
14 If you aren't well-suited by them, you might find you have bad habits. (7)
15 Is, with drink around, perhaps crowded during sales. (5)
17 Performing animal around in here. (5)
19 Plant with modern accommodations, probably located near the water. (4-3)
21 Transported, perhaps, but the Act cites disorderly appearance is responsible. (8)
23 Agrees it's a sort of smear? (6)
25 Not very happy with the old fuel mixture. (7)
26 Not mail for the "in" basket—the station being some distance away. (7)
27 Our language has his party on the right side, but Alice used it in part to dry out. (7,7)

DOWN

1 A little one has great connection, but not with the upright type. (4,5)
2 A rough spell between the end of yesterday and the beginning of tomorrow—meaning food for someone. (7)
3 You might find it grand wine, when not sticking to the main course. (9)
4 As the poet says, pay attention to the roll. (4)
5 A call for individual acknowledgement. (2,8)
6 One shouldn't do it in public, in character with *Twelfth Night*. (5)
7 Colors with this tone found out west. (7)
8 No light in the middle ones? (4)
13 You can get important natural products out of the sliced loaf variety. (10)
15 You might get up, as a part of the complex system. (9)
16 Seriously, this is found ahead of time around the home, in a sense. (9)
18 Islands in a body are responsible for it. (7)
20 Top game, some time ago. (7)
21 The purposes of tips? (4)
22 Now it's very, but not necessarily very bad. (5)
24 Pest easily distinguished from others, if you look at it. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1685

ACROSS: 1 The Dead Sea; 6 and 22 Self-seeking; 10 Portray; 11 Grafter; 12 Pictures; 13 Toast; 15 Error; 17 Anecdotal; 19 Take issue; 23 and 21 Roman noses; 24 Sawbones; 27 Agnates; 28 Initial; 29 Fast; 30 Flashlight. DOWN: 1 Tape; 2 Earlier; 3 Egret; 4 Daydreams; 5 Edges; 7 Extract; 8 First class; 9 Mastod[illegible] 14 Better half; 16 Reignite; 18 E[illegible]s; 20 Kimonos; 24 Sisal; 25 Oriel; 26 [illegible]ot.

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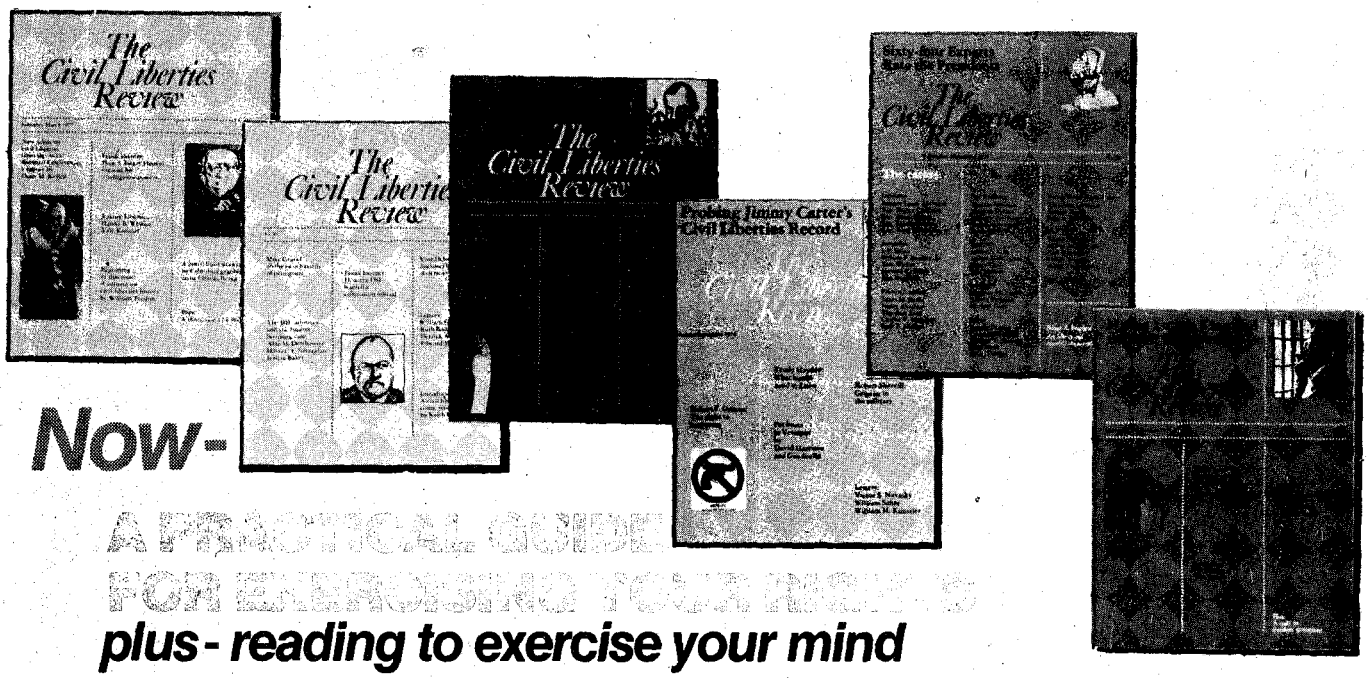
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